SPEECHI

BY

BABU SURENDRA NATH BAN.

1876-80.



EDITED BY

RAM CHANDRA PALIT

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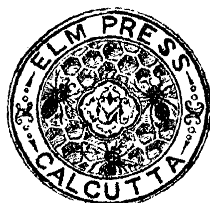
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CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.



INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE object of this publication is to preserve in a collected form the most important speeches of one of the most earnest and eloquent English speakers that our country has yet produced. Most of these speeches were not published before except in the shape of reports in newspapers; while those few which were published in the shape of pamphlets have already become scarce. In the meantime the demand for these speeches is daily becoming more pressing; the eagerness of our educated young men all over the country to peruse these admired speeches is daily increasing; and it is only in compliance with this demand that we have been induced to publish the speeches of a young worker who has only recently commenced his labours and who, therefore, let us hope, has yet a long and useful career before him.

It is not necessary for us to say anything regarding the merit of these speeches. They have been listened to by larger audiences, and have already excited in the country a deeper and a more fervid interest than the speeches of any other speaker in this country. In a country where English education is yet so exceedingly limited, audiences of two thousand or three thousand people have thronged the halls of Calcutta, Dacca and the great cities of Northern India to hear the enthusiastic political missionary preaching everywhere a deep and unshaken loyalty to the British Government which has already imparted to India Peace, Civilization, and a feeling of National Unity, but preaching also a steady constitutional agitation on the part of the people to secure those rights which no civilized Government, and least of all the English Government, can deny to a people who have learnt to demand them.

Tens of thousands of people who have listened with breathless attention and admiration to the eloquence of our young countryman have returned to their homes, convinced that the future welfare of India depends on the continuance of her connection with England,—but convinced also that that welfare is only to be secured by steady agitation on the part of the people for those rights which England has conceded to Canada, to Australia and to other dependencies, and which she cannot deny to her greatest dependency. Thus Loyalty to the British Government and Constitutional Agitation for the rights of the people are the two great maxims our young political Missionary has preached during the last few years, and educated India has accepted those great maxims with enthusiasm and joy. Peoples' associations are springing up into existence in every nook and corner of India, all marked by the same unfeigned loyalty to the British throne, and equally marked by a firm determination to obtain for the millions of India the right of representation and other rights which belong to the people under every civilized government.

Foremost among these associations of the people is the Indian Association, established in Calcutta on the 26th July 1876, a date which will be memorable in the history of political progress in India. The honour of establishing this Association in the metropolis of India belongs to Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea whose speeches we now publish, and his friend and co-worker Babu Ananda Mohan Bose, Barrister-at-Law, and Wrangler of the Cambridge University. Both these gentlemen completed their education in England and learnt in that free country the value of political agitation on the part of the people. Returning to their native country they established the Indian Association with the object of commencing such agitation ; and ever since they have known no higher object in life than to work with their countrymen and for their countrymen. Branch and affiliated Indian Associ-

ations have since been started in many districts in Bengal and many towns in Northern India, and something like an organized representation of the feelings and wishes of the people of India by her educated children has thus been happily commenced.

It is in connection with the Indian Association that Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea delivered most of the speeches that we now publish. It is not necessary here to recapitulate the labours of that Association during the past few years of its existence, as there is scarcely an educated man in all India who does not know and appreciate them. It will therefore suffice to briefly mention one or two things only, of more than ordinary interest, which the Indian Association has done or attempted to do.

One of the first things that claimed the attention of the Indian Association was the right of the people to be governed, as far as practicable, by their own countrymen, and not by foreigners. The most ardent admirers of the British rule in India will not deny that the almost total exclusion of indigenous talent from all the higher grades of service is a thing which is unprecedented in the history of India or perhaps of any other country. Mahomedan rule with all its despotism and bigotry acknowledged the rights of the people of India to serve in the higher ranks in every department, and Man Sing and Todar Mall and a host of other Hindus of note occupied positions which the subjects of the more enlightened British rule will in vain sigh for. Much of the discontent which is natural to a subject people is removed when the ruling race satisfies the legitimate ambition of the conquered people to discharge important duties in their own country; and the Afghan and Mogul Emperors of India found no better or more loyal subjects than those natives of the country whom they honoured with trust. Confidence begets confidence, loyalty is confirmed and enhanced by such concessions, and a foreign

rule is based on the broad foundations of the affection of the people. To those therefore who fancy dangers in reposing trust in a subject people we shall reply in the words of the London *Times* that it was not by trusting the subject people but by withdrawing such trust that the Mogul Empire came to grief. Another argument which is sometimes urged to exclude the people of India from serving the Government of their own country in the higher ranks is that they are not fitted for such posts by their education. Those who urge this argument have simply no facts in support of it ; on the contrary in every instance that an experiment has been made, it has resulted in brilliant success. In the few instances in which the people of the country have been honoured with high posts, whether that of a judge in the High Court or that of a colonel in the army, the education, loyalty and talent of those who have been so honoured have been found quite up to the mark for discharging the duties of such high offices. Indeed it could hardly be otherwise. A civilized government sincerely desiring to confer high posts to a subject race can *never* fail to educate such race to a fitness for such posts. Rome found no difficulty in getting men among her subject races to fill very high posts, although such races were far more barbarous than the people of India ; and England therefore, if she is really desirous of reposing trust on the people of her great dependency, will never find that people wanting. Indeed the only plausible reason for the exclusion of the people of India from the higher posts is to be found in the desire of English service-men to get as much from a conquered country as possible, and in their unwillingness, which Lord Lytton distinctly admitted in a recent Despatch to the late Secretary of State, to see the natives of the country in higher ranks than themselves. If such be the reasons of the exclusion we complain of, all that we can say is that both justice and sound policy are being sacrificed to the interests of service-men.

The Indian Association, then, observed this unjust exclusion with pain and regret ; they marked that the really governing class in India was the Covenanted Civil Service of India, and they lost no time in urging the rights of their countrymen to facilities for admission into this service. The maximum age for competing for this service was reduced by Lord Salisbury from 21 to 19, a measure which has had the effect of entirely excluding young men from India from appearing at the open competition in London. The protest which was inaugurated against this illiberal step by the Indian Association and was joined in by all India is a memorable event in the annals of this country. It was the first indication of united action and united feeling all through India, and the credit of evoking this universal agitation belongs to Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea. He made a stirring appeal to his countrymen, and crowded audiences almost in every important town in Northern India responded to the appeal. Whatever be the ultimate effect of this agitation, the fact of the united action on the part of all India is not without its value. If this unison in feeling and in action which has been so happily evoked by the Indian Association is perpetuated, better days for India cannot be very far off. If we are but true to ourselves and steady in our action, England cannot very long deny to us the rights which belong to the citizens of every civilized government. But if we are unsteady in our aims and endeavours, if we forget to-morrow the purposes of to-day, we do not deserve those rights, and shall never have them.

Well then, the Indian Association after having thus evoked the prayers of all India determined to convey them to England. With this purpose it deputed one of its most talented members, Babu Lal Mohan Ghose, Barrister-at-Law, at considerable expense. The success which has attended the labours of this gentleman in England is well known. His speech in the Willis's Rooms was listened to and admired

by a crowded audience; Mr. Bright, with his generous instincts, supported him, and within twenty-four hours after this celebrated speech had been uttered Government was obliged to lay on the table of the House of Commons its plan for affording facilities to Indian youths to serve in the higher ranks of service in India. Never before did India act with such unity of feeling and earnestness of purpose; never before was her action rewarded with such instantaneous result. This is an event which we ought to lay to heart; we have only to act in unison and in proper spirit, and a generous government will not and cannot refuse our just and loyal demands.

The concession, however, made by the Government is not exactly what India asked for. Indeed we have the shadow and not the substance, and the despatches published show that Lord Lytton or his advisers were responsible for the valuelessness of the concession. Lord Cranbrook, with his English instincts, suggested that there should be something like equality in position between the Indian youths selected under the New Rules and the English members of the Covenanted Civil Service, and he even generously offered to grant the same allowance to Indian youths as is granted to English candidates selected for the Civil Service during the two years of probation passed in England, to induce the former to go and complete their education in England. Lord Lytton rejected these generous offers,—his plan was not to establish anything like equality or community of feeling between the Covenanted Civilians and their Indian brethren, but to create a new service in every way inferior in prestige and administrative responsibility to the Covenanted Service, and then to call it the Native Civil Service. Some posts already held by the natives of the country, and some others involving no administrative independence or responsibility would be given to the members of this precious service, while all the real administrative power and responsibility

would be still reserved as hitherto in the hands of the Covenanted Civil Service. After this mockery of the legitimate aspirations of the people of the country, Lord Lytton had even the littleness to suggest that the gates of the Covenanted Civil Service of India should for ever be closed against the natives of India. Lord Cranbrook of course rejected this unjust and ungenerous suggestion.

Such is the concession that we owe to Lord Lytton and his advisers. India has with one united voice refused to feel grateful for the measure, and the Indian Association seeking to represent the true wishes of the people of India, continues the agitation for a real share in the administration of India for her children who have a just and legitimate right to it.

Another point which early engaged the attention of the Indian Association was the passing of the Press Act, generally known as the "Gagging Act," by Lord Lytton's Government. The Act was unworthy of the British Government, it was perfectly uncalled for in a time of profound peace, and it betrayed a sensitiveness and a narrowness of policy such as British rule in India had never before manifested, and such as no Government except that of Lord Lytton was perhaps capable of. It was in direct opposition to the liberal spirit and the noble traditions which have uniformly animated British rule in all parts of the world, it reminded one rather, of the illiberal policy of the Russian *regime* or the Second Empire in France, and by openly announcing a suspicion of disloyalty in the people and Press of India, it had a tendency to create it. Lastly, it made an exception in the case of newspapers conducted in English which are mostly edited and read by Englishmen, whom even the government of Lord Lytton had not the courage to curb, and it related only to newspapers edited in the vernaculars of India, which were considered to be the proper subjects for control because belonging to a conquered people.

The Indian Association marked with the deepest regret this Act of the Indian Government, subversive as it was of the first principles of English rule all over the world, and tending as it did to create a difference and distrust between the people and their rulers such as the Indian Association had ever attempted to prevent and to heal. It lost no time therefore to agitate in the matter, and rightly considering it useless to apply to the Government of Lord Lytton to repeal its own act, the Association carried its complaint to England. Mr. Gladstone, true to his generous nature, espoused the cause of the Indian Association which was the cause of all India, and in presenting its petition to the Parliament moved against this disgraceful Act. His powerful eloquence and close reasoning convinced all true Englishmen of the iniquity of the Act, all thinking men voted with him, but the conservative Government,—the strongest government in point of unity that England has seen for many a long year,—secured a numerical superiority, and the Gagging Act retains its place in the Statute Book of India. The Indian Association, however, has not lost heart, it steadily watches the operation of the Act, and is resolved to bring the question again before the Parliament, now that a Liberal Ministry has succeeded Lord Beaconsfield and his servile followers.

It is impossible within our brief limits even to allude to the many useful acts which the Indian Association has attempted during its brief career. Enough has been said to give our readers an idea of the useful career which the Association has commenced, and it is needless to multiply instances. Nevertheless we cannot conclude without making mention of one more attempt of the Association,—the last, the most important, and perhaps the most difficult it has yet undertaken. This is to establish a deputation in England, to keep the English public informed of Indian matters. The

brief experience of the Indian Association has convinced it that political agitation in India, in order to succeed must be carried on in England also. In that great country the moral atmosphere is free and healthy and not despotic;—there public opinion is omnipotent and cannot be drowned by the voice of authority or despotism;—there the sense of justice and fair play natural to every free born Englishman is not warped by the unhealthy training of a despotic rule over a subject country. If India can convey her prayers to that free country, those prayers shall be heard; if India can represent her wrongs before that great nation, those wrongs shall be redressed. A powerful Ministry may for a time support the despotic acts of the Indian Government, but cannot for ever resist the all-powerful influence of the great English nation. Justice if sought in England cannot for ever be denied; England cannot, without ceasing to be the noble country that she is, turn a deaf ear to the just demands of her greatest dependency. If, therefore, agitation be necessary to temper the despotism of the Indian Government, that agitation must have its fountain-head in England. And the Indian Association has grasped this great truth and is straining every nerve to establish a deputation in England,—there to convey the prayers,—to represent the wrongs,—to advocate the just and loyal demands of the two hundred and fifty million inhabitants of India.

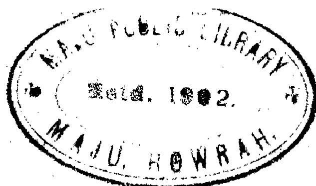
The Indian Association has a great future before it. Let it act steadily and be true to itself, and it will deserve and command success. The main idea of that Association is borrowed from the government and constitution of free English Colonies like Canada and Australia. These constitutions teach us two principles which must go hand in hand, *viz.* CONTINUANCE OF THE BRITISH RULE and REPRESENTATIVE CONSTITUTION under that rule;—and these principles have been grasped by the Indian Association. Thus loyalty

to the British rule, and agitation for a Constitutional Government are, as we have already stated, the two maxims which the Indian Association has always promulgated, and its prime mover Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea has everywhere preached.

To secure this two-fold object, the Indian Association is on the one hand founding branch associations in every important town in India, and on the other hand trying to establish a deputation in England. By these means it will organize a system of representation of the wishes and prayers of the people of India, not only before the Government in India and in England, but also before that higher tribunal, the great English People who must ultimately shape the destinies of the people of India. By means of her numerous branches, the Indian Association will on the one hand preach loyalty to the British rule, dispel disaffection where such may exist, and convince the people that their true welfare depends on the continuance of that British rule under whose benign influence India is daily becoming one great and united country. On the other hand it will by means of these numerous branches, continue agitation for political rights, for the people, for that free form of Government which England has bestowed on Canada and Australia and which she cannot deny to India. Such is the two-fold mission of the Indian Association, as we understand it,—Loyalty to the British Rule, and Agitation for a Representative and Free Government;—and in trying to fulfil this noble mission the Association demands and should assuredly receive the warm sympathy and active co-operation of every true patriot in India.

CALCUTTA:
1st July, 1880.

R. C. PALIT.



JOSEPH MAZZINI.

The following address on Joseph Mazzini was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea at a Meeting of the Utterpara Hitakari Sabha, held on the 2nd April 1876.

GENTLEMEN,

I freely confess, I consider it a great privilege to be permitted to address such a distinguished body as the Hita-Kari Sabha ; I say distinguished, not because of the wealth, rank, or social influence of any of its members, however great these may be, but because of the eminent patriotism which characterises your Sabha. To succour the needy, the distressed and the indigent, to be the father of the fatherless, the friend of the poor, to work for the promotion of the education of our women, whose noble susceptibilities if properly developed, would materially contribute to the advancement of our country, are objects which must always commend your Sabha to the sympathy, the consideration, and the respect of all right-thinking men. But, patriotic as you are and noble and lofty as your aspirations may be, I think you cannot but feel the deepest interest, in the life and character of one of the sublimest spirits that ever graced the ranks of humanity, one of those shining lights that bursting forth from amid the impenetrable gloom which enveloped the fate of his native country, rose to lead his countrymen to a higher type of national existence, and to exhibit in his own life and

character an example of heroic self-sacrifice, of noble self-endurance, of burning love for mankind, of stead-fast hatred for tyranny, such as have covered the name of Joseph Mazzini with immortal glory and have made that name the watchword of freedom, the symbol of down-trodden races, and the rallying point of dispersed nationalities. Gentlemen, I confess I tremble before the magnitude of the task I have imposed upon myself, and I say so in all sincerity of heart. When I recall to mind the spledour of Mazzini's character. the greatness of his self-sacrifice, how he flung away the prospects of a life full of rich promises of earthly greatness, in order that he might consecrate his energies to the accomplishment of Italian unity and Italian independence, how in the prosecution of this noble purpose he was chased from one country to another, from his own native land to France, from France to Switzerland, and from Switzerland to England ; when I recall to mind his unutterable sufferings, how he passed twenty years of his lifetime in a small miserable room with scarcely space enough for him to move about, how the most affectionate of men saw those nearest and dearest to him snatched away from him and cruelly slaughtered by the enemies of his country, how his heart yearned after his beloved mother, the companion of his early years ; how amid all his trials, his sufferings, amid moments of doubt and hesitation, the clear, steady, and unflinching spirit of the man shone forth ; I say when I recall all these things to mind, I feel that I stand in the dread presence of a being whose image I am not worthy to behold, I feel that I am, perhaps, trespassing upon consecrated ground, and I stand aghast at my own temerity.

But a sense of overwhelming duty bids me to proceed. I feel that Mazzini's is a life which my countrymen ought to be in possession of, for that life is full of lessons of th[illegible] to us all. The Italians were degraded

down-trodden and oppressed. Under the influence of Mazzini's teachings, they achieved their unity and their nationality, and now they are on the highroad to the climax of national greatness. As the Italians were miserable and degraded, so are we; and as they rose, so might we rise, though fortunately in our case, from the favourable circumstances of our position, through far different means. It is because the life of Joseph Mazzini presents us in a most striking manner with those traits of character which we ought to imitate, and which secure national greatness, that I have ventured to introduce this subject to you here to-night.

Joseph Mazzini was born at Genoa in the year 1805. His father was a physician, his mother was a woman of great talent and deep affection, and she appears to have exercised a profound influence on the mental and moral character of the future hero of Italian independence. Gentlemen, I venture to lay down this broad and general proposition, that a mother exercises a deep and profound influence on the mental and moral character of her children, and that influence is in many respects wider, deeper, and more far-reaching than that of the father. The lives of great men furnish numerous instances in support of the truth of this proposition. The father of the Duke of Wellington was but a fiddler, while his mother was a woman of great talent, and of high ambition; and accordingly we find that all the brothers of the Duke of Wellington were men of great mark, ability, and talent. His eldest brother was the Earl of Mornington, who afterwards became Marquis of Wellesley and who, as you are aware, was one of the ablest of our Governors-General. No doubt there are many things in his administration which we feel bound to condemn, there are many things in that administration which the impartial voice of history will not approve, but we must do him the justice to record that he was one of the ablest men that

ever filled the office of Governor-General of India. It is not necessary to waste too many words to shew, that the Duke of Wellington was a man of consummate genius. The conqueror of Napoleon, the hero of a hundred fights, it must be admitted was a man of commanding talents. Another brother Lord Cowley was also a man of great ability. He was accredited as English Ambassador to the Court of the Tuilleries, and acquitted himself in the discharge of his delicate and difficult duties with credit and satisfaction.

Passing now from the Duke of Wellington to his great antagonist, Napoleon, we find that extraordinary man greatly indebted to his mother for his future eminence. He is reported to have declared to his private physician Dr. O'Meara, while pining away the last days of his life on the barren rock of St. Helena, that it was to his mother's influence that he must mainly ascribe the success which he was able to achieve in life and which at one time had dazzled and astonished Europe. We all know the great and beneficial influence which Alfred's mother exercised over the mind of young Alfred. Sir Walter Scott's mother is said to have exercised a similar influence in framing the mind of the great poet and novelist.

From the above instances, then, the conclusion becomes irresistible that mothers do exercise a great, a profound and a far-reaching influence over the minds of their children. Are we not here then furnished with a powerful argument in support of female education ? It is at all events quite clear that the advocates of female education are not dreamy enthusiasts, idle speculators who have not any solid facts to go upon. The facts of history, the biographies of great men, all speak to the importance of training the female mind. With these facts before me, therefore, I venture to say that the question of national progress is intimately dependent upon the question of female progress, and that if we wish to

see our country great and prosperous, we must begin by directing our efforts to raise the condition of our women.

Gentlemen, passing now from this digression, let us fix our attention upon the early life of Joseph Mazzini. Even from his earliest years, it was apparent to those around him that he possessed a deeply sympathetic nature, and many touching stories are told in connection with this part of his life. I shall relate only one, as it happens to be typical. When Mazzini was only six years old, he happened to be out with his mother on a stroll. As he was going along, his eyes caught the sight of a beggar who was seated on the steps of a church. This spectacle of human misery made so profound an impression on the mind of the boy, that he stood before the church, transfixed and almost rooted to the spot. His mother suspecting that the sight of the beggar had frightened the boy, caught hold of him and forced him away. But no sooner had they gone a few paces, when Mazzini tore himself away from his mother, rushed into the arms of the beggar, huddled him with warmth, exclaiming "give him something, mother, give him something, mother." The old man returned the caresses of the child, and addressing his mother, said "Lady, love the child well, for he will love the people."

The political life of Joseph Mazzini may be said to begin on the first Sunday of April 1821. On that day, while he was out as usual with his mother, a sight of deep agony met his eyes. He saw a number of Italian refugees huddled together near the Strada Neova of Genoa, and reduced to the last extremity of poverty and distress. They had risen up in arms against one of the corrupt Governments of Italy, they had been defeated, and now they were looking forward to an asylum in a far off country, across the seas, where they might be secure against the vengeance of their victorious enemies, and where amid new scenes and new associations,

they might forget the sorrows of their beloved mother country. The sight of the Italian patriots, in the last extremity of distress and poverty, made a deep impression on the mind of young Mazzini, and from that day he resolved to dedicate his life and energies to the salvation of his country. Young as he was, this resolution once formed, he pursued it through good report, and evil report, and amid unheard-of trials and sufferings.

Mazzini was brought up for the profession of the Law, and in due course of time became an advocate. To his parents, it was a day of great rejoicing, when their gifted son for the first time put on the advocate's gown. They confidently looked forward to a glorious career for him at the bar, a career which might perhaps place him on the pinnacle of earthly fame. But they were doomed to bitter disappointment. The son had already made up his mind to dedicate his life and his energies to the accomplishment of Italian unity. Mazzini loved his parents, but he loved his country more.

Mazzini had already joined the Carbonaris. The Carbonaris formed a secret association. There comes a period, gentlemen, in the history of a nation's development when these secret associations abound. When a nation having passed through a preliminary stage of moral preparation, is on the eve of entering into a contest with the object of subverting the Government under which it lives, the Government being osposed to the tendencies of the times and suppressing freedom with a high hand, then is it do we find these secret societies starting up on all sides around in prolific abundance. The Government has to be overthrown, the Government has to be subverted. The Government will resist if it has the power. Consequently all such attempts against the government of the country must necessarily be carried on under the seal of solemn secrecy. Thus you will

find in the history of Modern Greece, that it was a secret society, the Heitaria, which prepared the Greeks for that contest which culminated in the independence of their country. It was the secret society of the "United Club of Irishmen" which prepared the Irish for the great struggle of 1798 ; and finally it was the secret society of Young Italy founded by Mazzini, which by evoking the sentiment of national unity and national independence helped very materially towards the consummation of Italian unity and Italian independence.

I need hardly remind you, gentlemen, that there are no secret associations in India ; and it is indeed not necessary that we should have any. We are not rebels ; we are not treasonably affected towards the Government. We are loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen. We are indeed anxious to secure the permanence of her rule in this country upon the broad basis of a nation's affections. Let us have political associations by all means and as many of them as you like, but not secret associations. Let us work openly, in the full blaze of publicity and not in secret, for the regeneration of our country. Let in the full light of day to all our proceedings and let Government and its officers inspect them, if they choose.

Joseph Mazzini, was for the first time, imprisoned in July 1830. He had gone on some mission connected with the Carbonaris, and was betrayed through treachery. He was confined in the fortress of Savona. Let us, gentlemen, for a few moments, concentrate our attention upon this spectacle of youthful captivity. Mazzni was confined in the topmost story of the fortress. Before him lay the illimitable expanse of the ocean, above him was the vaulted canopy of heaven. With these dread symbols of eternity before him, Mazzini lay brooding in his prison-cell over the misfortunes of his country. Was Italy always to remain degraded and down-

trodden, was there to be no termination to her sufferings? Must the heart of the patriot for ever bled? Was the home of Brutus and Cato, to be the den of tyrants and despots? These were the thoughts, these the feelings which agitated the mind of the youthful apostle of Italian freedom. The Carbonaris had indeed worked and struggled for Italian independence and unity. They had worked and they had failed. Was there then no hope for his country? Mazzini rightly concluded that the Carbonaris had proceeded altogether on a wrong principle. Italy was to be united; Italy was to be free. But they had laid down that Italian unity and Italian independence were to be effected by means of foreign help. No, said Mazzini, if Italy was to be united and free, that great object must be accomplished by her own unaided strength, by the power of her own right arm. Italy must first learn the great lesson of self-reliance, self-dependence, before she could run the higher race for national unity and national independence. Foreign aid must be systematically eschewed. From within the walls of his prison, he formed the idea of establishing an association which was to supersede the Carbonaris, and which was to embody this great principle of absolute, thorough and complete self-dependence.

Emerging from his prison wall, he seriously directed his attention to the task of founding the association he had resolved upon. Already he had been exiled from his country; already Italy had ceased to be his home. But he was a man of broad views and of wide sympathies. He made the world his home; wherever he was, that was his home. Exiled from his country, he established himself at Marseilles; and it was here that he established the association of Young Italy.

Young Italy was a secret association. The objects which it proposed to itself were the eatablishment of Italian unity and Italian independence, under a Republican form of gover-

ment. Italy was to be free. Italy was to be united. Italy was to be a republic. Having placed these objects before him, the great apostle of Italian unity, set himself to the task of accomplishing them. And first the Italian mind must be roused to the necessity of Italian unity, Italian independence, and the establishment of an Italian Republic. Moral revolution must precede the accomplishment of the material Revolution which he had sketched out in his mind. The moral Revolution of Italy was sought to be brought about by means of tracts and journals. At the same time Mazzini published a body of instructions for the guidance of the members of Young Italy. Some of the lessons which he endeavoured to enforce in these instructions are of the deepest importance, and embody principles of wide-spread application which you would do well to bear in mind. Well then, gentlemen, in the first place, Mazzini taught that the purification of the soul by virtue is necessary for the attainment of any holy enterprise. He thus taught that moral regeneration, which in most cases is synonymous with spiritual regeneration, must precede political regeneration, and must precede the accomplishment of national greatness. Now, gentlemen, this is a proposition which receives confirmation from the facts of universal history. And, with your permission, I will dwell upon it for a few moments in order to place this great truth beyond the possibility of doubt or conjecture. What was the Puritan Revolt but the second act of the Reformation? The spirit of inquiry in England had been roused by the Reformation. It had at first been confined to religious topics. But it soon outstripped those limits and displayed its energy in the sphere of politics. Englishmen who had at first only inquired about the soundness of their religious doctrines, began before a century had elapsed to inquire about the soundness of the political institutions under which they lived. Doubt and dissatisfaction

followed inquiry. They discovered that the power of the sovereign was far too great to be compatible with freedom, and that the institutions under which they lived were in short a scandal and a disgrace to civilization. They resolved to curtail the power of the king and to pull down their institutions. There was a struggle between the king and his people. We all know what the result of that struggle was; we all know how the proud fabric of British freedom was cemented by the blood of a king who had betrayed his trust. And indeed the keystone of that fabric was not laid till a foreigner had been summoned from across the seas, himself the proud defender of the liberties of his own country, to be the protector of British freedom.

In the same way, gentlemen, in France, the French Revolution may be said to have begun by an attack upon the Church. And when the Church had been demolished and the Jesuits had been expelled by 1750, the ground was shifted, and then commenced the attack against the State, an attack which led to the overthrow of the French monarchy and the achievement of human freedom.

So also, gentlemen, the purely spiritual reformation of Nanak paved the way for the political regeneration of the Sikh people, under the leadership of Gooroo Govind and his successors.

Viewed in the light of these historical facts, the Brahmo movement assumes an importance which it is impossible to exaggerate. I feel certain, gentlemen, that when the history of India comes to be written with that spirit of impartiality, that justness, of sentiment, that breadth of conception, which the importance of the subject demands, a high and worthy place will be accorded to the Brahmo movement as one of the most powerful agencies of Indian progress and Indian civilization.

Thus then, gentlemen, we find from a broad survey of history that moral and spiritual regeneration is the precursor of political regeneration. And are we not here furnished with the strongest incentive to the exercise of the highest morality? Our own happiness, the happiness of coming generations, depends upon the practice of virtue, upon the observance of high principles. Who that has a heart that will not respond to this call of duty and strive after a conscientious discharge of patriotic duties, in the name of posterity?

There is another principle of universal application which Mazzini lays down in his instructions for the guidance of Young Italy, and upon which I propose dwelling for a few moments. Mazzini says, the feeling of nationality is necessary before a nation could exist, that in fact the *desire* for national existence must precede the *achievement* of nationality. We might again appeal to the facts of history in support of the truth of this broad proposition.

You are probably aware, gentlemen, that the Greeks achieved their freedom in the year 1827. For ages, the Greeks had suffered from the influences of a foreign rule. But about the middle of the last century, the aspiration for nationality first dawned upon the Greek mind. Slowly, silently, and gradually, the idea widened and deepened, till at last it nerved and prepared the Greeks for that struggle which culminated in the achievement of their independence. In the same way, the teachings of Gooroo Govind roused in the minds of his disciples a lofty desire for political freedom and national ascendancy, a desire which paved the way for the ultimate establishment of a Sikh Kingdom. And lastly, did not the writings of Mazzini, by kindling in the Italian mind a desire for Italian unity and Italian independence, materially contribute towards the consummation of those great ends?

A journal was established in connection with Young Italy. The journal propagated ideas dangerous to the petty and tyrannical Governments in Italy. Its introduction into Italy was therefore at once interdicted. But it is seldom that Governments are successful in enforcing such prohibitory laws, especially when such laws are against popular sentiment. The journal continued to be introduced into Italy as before, in defiance of prohibitory and interdictory laws. In its desperation the Italian Government of Piedmont bethought itself of French aid; and the Government of France, (for it was at Marseilles that the journal was printed and published), was desired to prohibit the publication of the journal in French territory. Corrupt Governments are always in league with one another. The publication of the journal was prohibited, and Mazzini was exiled from France. Driven from France, he sought shelter in Switzerland, and from there he planned his first expedition which was against Savoy. The expedition proved a complete failure. Mazzini's friends now endeavoured to persuade him that Italian unity and Italian independence were a dream, that it was at all events beyond his power to hasten or accomplish them and that he had therefore better give up that object, which he had taken up as the task of his life. But Mazzini's position was taken; his lot in life was cast, and he refused to recede. The consummation of Italian unity, the consummation of Italian independence might be a dream, but it was a dream, which was very dear to him, and he was not to be persuaded into giving it up.

Mazzini's was a broad and expansive mind. His sympathies were wide. Italy, no doubt, lay nearest to his heart. But the guardian deity of Italy, that presided over the portals of his heart, was not a jealous god that excluded all other objects of affection and adoration. He yearned after Italian unity and Italian independence, but he longed

also to see the reign of democracy and liberty established throughout Europe, Mazzini also rightly concluded that if he could substitute throughout Europe the reign of peoples for the reign of monarchs, he would secure for the cause which was so dear to him, the support of the moral opinion of Europe. Under the influence of these beliefs, the great apostle of Italian unity established the Association of Young Europe in Switzerland in 1834. It is not necessary, gentlemen, that I should detain you with any detailed account of this Association. Its constitution was based upon the model of Young Italy.

But after the failure of the expedition against Savoy, Mazzini and his followers were subjected to a severe persecution. They were exiled from Switzerland. Mazzini had now no place left for him in the European Continent which might offer him an asylum. The proscribed of his own country, the proscribed of France, the proscribed of Switzerland, he turned his thoughts naturally towards that great and interesting country, the island home of freedom, the country of Pym, Vane, and Hampden, consecrated by the blood of a thousand patriots. He took a loving farewell of Switzerland, and in 1837 for the first time found himself among the island homes of England.

But in the year before, Mazzini had passed through a terrible crisis. In that year, one of those tempests of moral doubt and scepticism to which minds devoted to noble ends are especially susceptible, had overtaken him. Mazzini had made great and terrible sacrifices for the accomplishment of the aim of his life. But, up to this time, success had not crowned his efforts. Nor was it, in his own person, that he had made these sacrifices. At his beck and at his bidding the youth and the manhood of Italy had risen up by hundreds and thousands to lay down their lives at the alter of their country's independence, and yet success had not crowned

their efforts. Was the accomplishment of Italian unity and independence then possible, or was it only a dream? If indeed it were a dream, where then would he stand? What would then be his position. The blood of how many martyrs would then rest upon his shoulders? How many wives had he made widows, how many children orphans, how many sisters had he deprived of their only brothers, how many mothers of their only children, the stay of their lives, the support of their old age. And yet perhaps all these calamities he had brought upon countless homes, in the prosecution of a mere dream, a chimera, a phantom. These distressing thoughts choked him, and withered away the very life that was within him. He was half tempted to lay violent hands on himself. But gradually and slowly the clear, bright, serene spirit of the man shone forth from amidst the almost impenetrable gloom which surrounded him. His religion came to his aid. Mazzini was a man of deep, fervent piety, and a soul illumined by piety and earnest religious fervour was, at last, able to cope with that tempest of doubt which had nearly ship-wrecked his moral nature.

But it seemed as if the angel of fate which had presided over the birth of the prophet of Italian unity had predetermined that his path through life should be strewn with sorrows. Scarcely had he set his foot in England, when we find him confronted by the most abject and degrading poverty. His mother had all along, unknown to his father, supplied him with funds. These remittances in England he divided between himself and three other associates. His mother had meant the money for himself; he meant it for himself and three other comrades. The result was that it was not sufficient for any body. His greatness of soul would not permit him to enjoy the comforts of life, while his comrades, the companions of his exile, would be starving. He was thus reduced to such great straits that he had on one

occasion to pawn his old coats and boots, to obtain the necessaries of life for himself and his companions. If he had pursued the profession of an Italian advocate, he would possibly not have known what adversity was. But the path towards the height of moral greatness is strewn with sorrows and sufferings, and the great apostle of Italian unity bore them all cheerfully in the name of his beloved Italy. Literature however came to his rescue. He was a man of great literary powers, and by the exercise of his literary talents he soon got a competency in England.

I must ask you, gentlemen, in this place, to dwell with me for a few moments upon a remarkable trait in Mazzini's character, a trait which has only been feebly illustrated by the events narrated in the course of my address. Up to this time, we have seen that Mazzini was a man of profound genius, with vast powers of organization, of great literary accomplishments, of deep love for his countrymen and humanity at large. We shall presently find another important trait in his character exhibited in a striking manner. We shall find that he was equally remarkable for sagacity and shrewdness, and was thus quite a match for the corrupt Governments of Europe. It is with some regret that I enter upon the consideration of those circumstances which serve to illustrate this important feature in Mazzini's character, because they cast such grave and serious aspersions upon the character of some English Statesmen, whose memories are deservedly held in high veneration by their countrymen. About the year 1844, while Mazzini was staying in England, a suspicion rose in his mind that his letters were tampered with, in the English Post Office. He found that letters addressed to him always arrived two hours later than the proper time. To assure himself of the reasonableness of this suspicion as well as also to collect evidence, he posted

in the presence of witnesses, in the same place in London, several letters some addressed to himself, others addressed to fictitious persons at the same residence. His witnesses and himself then came back to his lodgings to be present at the delivery of the letters. Now the letters addressed to Mazzini arrived two hours later than those addressed to the fictitious persons. He obtained written statements of these circumstances from his witnesses. He pushed the inquiry still further. On one occasion, he posted letters addressed to himself enclosing grains of fine hair, sand &c., so folded that if the letters were opened, these must necessarily fall out. The letters came back to him without the grains of sand, fine hair, and so forth. Having in this way collected a considerable body of evidence, which established beyond all doubt that his letters were tampered with, in the English Post Office, he placed his case in the hands of a member of the House of Commons. Great was the excitement at these charges being made, and a Committee of both Houses was appointed to inquire into the matter. The astounding revelation was made that from 1806 to 1844 there was scarcely a minister who had not stooped to the degradation and infamy of obtaining information by violating private correspondence, that even such men as Sir Robert Peel, Mr. George Canning, Viscount Melbourne, Lord Palmerston, the Duke of Wellington, Lord John Russel, the Marquis of Normandy, and the Earl of Aberdeen had not thought it beneath them to practice such low and degrading tricks.* But the infamy of the transaction does not end here. When Lord Aberdeen was asked whether any part of the information obtained from Mazzini's letters had been communicated to any foreign government, the noble Lord replied that not a syllable of that correspondence had been submitted to any foreign government. The Committee however came to the conclu-

* *See* Westminister, Review, LXXXII., September 1844.

sion not long after, that some portions of the information obtained from Mazzini's correspondence had been so forwarded!

One can scarcely repress his indignation as he reads this miserable record of crime, of folly and chicanery. English writers naturally wax very wrath over the tricks of a Fouche or a Talleyrand. But here have we not as base, as unworthy, as miserable a trick as ever was practised by the basest and the most ignominious of French administrators, and to crown all we have the spectacle of an English Statesman of high repute, demeaning himself to falsehood, to extricate himself from the difficulties of his situation.

Gentlemen, I must now hasten over the remaining incidents in the life of Mazzini. The ideas of Italian unity and independence had spread far and wide, and had infected all circles of society from the highest to the lowest. The Italian mind had been stirred to its very depths. The teachings of "Young Italy" were now bearing fruits, the flame of insurrection burst forth in several parts of the country. In 1848, Lombardy raised the standard of revolt against the Austrian domination; other parts of Italy followed the example. It is not necessary, gentlemen, that I should take you through these sanguinary details of the struggle for Italian unity. Suffice it to say that Mazzini took a leading part in them. Let it be recorded to his eternal honour that he never planned an insurrection or an expedition in which he could not take a prominent part. His was a noble and a generous soul, which recoiled from the thought of placing others in positions of peril which he could not share. In 1859, the principality of Naples lay at the feet of Garibaldi, but Garibaldi made it over to the king of Piedmont. The cause of Italian unity thus advanced one step nearer towards realization. A still further advance was made in this direction in 1866. In that

year taking advantage of the struggle between Austria and Prussia, Italy declared war against Austria, with France as an ally. Venice was added to France, which exchanged it with Italy for a frontier Italian province. Thus then with the unimportant exception of Venice, the whole of Italy was divided between two potentates, the Pope and the king of Piedmont. Italian unity was consummated at last in 1870, when two neighbouring nations were engaged in a sanguinary and fratricidal contest. When in 1870 France and Germany were wasting their energies in a mortal conflict, the French Zoaves who had hitherto upheld the tottering throne of the Vicar of Christ, had to be withdrawn from Rome. The Italian troops taking advantage of this opportunity entered Rome, deposed the Pope, and proclaimed the unification of Italy, under Victor Emanuel. The Austrians had already been driven out of Italy. Italy was thus free, and was now united. The dream of the prophet of Italian independence had been accomplished, but only partially. Italy was to be free, Italy was to be united ; but she was to enjoy these blessings under a Republican form of Government. Mazzini would gladly have assented to the monarchical regime, if indeed he could be induced to believe that that regime was the outcome of the national will. But he believed that Italy was at heart republican, and that the national feeling in favour of the monarchical regime had been influenced by Government pressure. Strongly impressed with this belief, he set himself to the task of editing a Republican Journal called the 'Roma del Popolo' to propagate his views on this subject. Death came upon him while he might be said to have been engaged in this task. He died of pleurisy at Pisa on the 10th of March 1872.

Thus died Mazzini the hero of Italian unity and independence. I owe you an apology, gentlemen, for the manner in which I have treated this great subject. I cannot indeed

flatter myself that I have succeeded in presenting to you the many noble traits of character which were exhibited in the career of this great man. His was a life choked with sorrows, with trials, with sufferings, yet it was a life of ceaseless, unsparing, and self-imposed work for the good of his countrymen and of humanity. Many of us, after perhaps having delivered a lecture at some public meeting, or having attended some public discussion, or having paid a subscription in aid of some public object, are apt to consider ourselves as patriots. I would ask these gentlemen, to come forward and stand by the side of Mazzini, compare their love for mankind with his, their patriotism with his, their self-sacrifice with his, and then call themselves patriots if they choose. The life of Mazzini teaches us, in the most striking manner the great duty of self-sacrifice. If we wish to see our country great and prosperous, let us learn a lesson of self-sacrifice at the feet of the great apostle of Italian unity. Let us learn to love our country with that unselfishness with which Mazzini loved Italy. Let us learn to forget self before the interests of Fatherland. I cannot indeed believe that you are wholly wanting in capacity for self-sacrifice. Am I to understand that the countrymen of Sakyamuni, the countrymen of him who flung away the splendours of a throne in order that he might become the apostle of humanity, are wanting in self-sacrifice? I cannot, I will not believe it. I hold that we have in us, the latent embers of this heaven-born power, and that as knowledge advances and our faculties are enlarged, the embers of this latent capacity will rekindle themselves with a tenfold brilliancy and lead to heroic exertions and noble deeds. Mazzini's labours teach us the importance of political associations and how such associations must be worked in order to secure the highest amount of good possible to be secured from them. Mazzini was the founder of numerous associations, of Young

Italy, of Young Europe, and of one or two other associations which I have not mentioned. Now, gentlemen, I venture to lay down this general proposition with regard to the duty of political associations. I venture to think that it is the duty of political associations more to educate public opinion with regard to important public questions of the day, and less to present petitions to Governments, on every conceivable and inconceivable occasion. I am afraid, gentlemen, none of the political associations in this country aspire to accomplish this great object with anything like the energy which the subject demands. I wish to speak of our existing political associations with respect : of the British Indian Association especially I wish to speak with the highest respect. No native of India can be insensible to the many blessings which that body has been the means of conferring on this country ; no native of India can be ignorant of the fact, that it was the British Indian Association which first stimulated the political activity of the people of this part of India. But at the same time, I feel bound to remark that, that association has not any organization for the performance of this important duty, *viz.*, the creating of a healthy public opinion on all the leading topics of the day. We do not want many political associations whose only concern would be to heap cart-loads of petitions on the devoted heads of our Government officials. On the contrary, let us have political associations on the model of the Catholic Association of Daniel O'Connel. How was it that the great Irish Liberator wrung from an unwilling Parliament and an unwilling Minister the great boon of the Catholic Emancipation Bill ? It was certainly not by deluging Parliament or the Lord Lieutenant with petitions, but by creating a deep and an ardent feeling in the minds of his countrymen in favour of the Bill. Let our Political associations seriously set themselves to the task of educating Public Opinion ;

and then, I say, they will supply a real want and discharge an important public duty.

Gentlemen, Mazzini lived and died for Italian unity. He rightly judged that Italy would never be great, unless the different Italian peoples were united together by the bonds of a common nationality and common institutions. Might we not see in this much to guide and to instruct us? Is Indian greatness possible unless we are thoroughly welded together into a compact mass? If the question of uniting the varied nationalities of India may seem chimerical, why may we not try and establish at least a bond of sympathy, of fellow feeling and brotherly love, between the varied races that inhabit this vast continent? Are not Bengalis, Madrassis, Maharattas, the people of the Punjab, of Oude, of Central India, all brothers? Why should it then be so difficult to establish between them that feeling of sympathy which nature with her own hand has preordained? Let us learn, gentlemen, to feel for a brother's griefs and sorrows. If trials and sufferings overtake the Madrasi, the Mahratta, or the Punjabi, let us as brothers stretch out to them the hand of sympathy and fellowship. And when the whole of India comes to be bound in this treble chain of love, sympathy, and esteem, the day of Indian greatness would not be distant. And I have, gentlemen, a suggestion in this connection to make. We have a very useful institution among us, the Hindu Mela. Now why not make it an Indian Mela? Changing its character and widening its scope, why not ask the representatives and leading men of the different Presidencies to meet us once every year? We should then have done something towards cementing the bonds of sympathy and love that ought to exist between the different provinces.

But gentlemen, if we cannot transport ourselves beyond the limits of Bengal, why not strive to establish a bond of

sympathy and love between the different sections of our own community in Bengal? Can it be said that there exists anything like good feeling between the different sections of our community in Bengal? Is it not too often the practice for the Brahmos to heap abuse and contumely on sceptics, and for sceptics to heap abuse and contumely on Brahmos? Do we not often find Hindoos and Mussulmans engaged in a war of bitter words and harsh recriminations? Away with such abuse, such unseemly wrangling, such recriminations. Hindoos, Mussulmans, Brahmos, Christians, and Sceptics! all learn to merge your differences and your strifes, and in the name of a common country, enlist yourselves under the banner of the religion of the Fatherland. Prove yourselves true to the banner of this noble religion, and the countless blessings of unborn generations will be upon you.

But these are not the only lessons which the great apostle of Italian unity taught and for which he lived and died. Mazzini taught the great doctrine of self-reliance. May we not here also learn a lesson of the utmost practical importance? I firmly believe, gentlemen, that if India is ever to be great and prosperous, it could only be brought about by the aid of our own resources. I rejoice to find that we have already learnt the first lesson in the great doctrine of self-reliance. What is Dr. Sircar's project for the establishment of a science association, but the embodiment of the principle of self-reliance? We hail the prospect of the speedy opening of this institution, not only because, when established, it would be a noble temple of science, in every respect worthy of its distinguished projector, and because it would stimulate and encourage the cultivation of science in this country; but also because it would be an indigenous institution conceived by an Indian, supported by Indians, and worked by Indian agency. Dr. Sircar has systematically eschewed Government aid, and if Sir Richard Temple has

come forward to help the institution with his noble munificence, the greater is the credit due to him. It is because gentlemen, Dr. Sircar's Science Association is to be an indigenous institution, that it deserves our warmest sympathy and support.

We have indeed learnt our first lesson in the necessity of self-help, and if we continue to advance in this direction in the same way as we have done within the last few years, I venture to predict the dawning of a bright and glorious day for India. But let us have faith in the future of our country, and let us have a firm belief in the high destinies which are in store for her. I am afraid, gentlemen, it is too often the practice with our skin-deep patriots to fold up their hands, to do nothing, to cover themselves up in an impenetrable veil of apathy and indolence, because forsooth India must ever remain as degraded as she is now. I call these men traitors, the enemies of their country. May the execration of their countrymen be their lot. Have they ever taken the trouble to study the past history of their country ? Did not Vejaya Sing, a native of Bengal, the eldest son of the King of Bengal, conquer Ceylon ? Was not Panduvasa, the founder of the line of historical kings of Ceylon, a native of Bengal ? Were not the ancient Bengalees remarkable for their courage, and their spirit of maritime enterprise ? Was not Bengal noted in the commercial records of those times ? Was not Tamluk a great seaport town in those days, from which in a Bengali vessel the great Chinese traveller Fah-Hian started on his homeward bound journey ? I ask those who despair of the future of their country to ponder well over these facts, and let them then despair of the future of their country, if they can. But why need I confine myself within the limits of Bengal, why should I not transport myself to the seat of the ancient Aryans of India ? Let me wander amid the consecrated relics of

revered sires. Were not our Aryan ancestors great in Literature, great in Science, great in War, great in Morals ? Who will tell me that the country of Valmiki, or Vyasa, of Goutama, of Sankaracharjya, of Panini and Patanjali, will for ever remain in the depths of her present degradation. If the mere mention of the names of these immortal worthies strikes a chord in our hearts, will not the proud consciousness that some portion of their noble blood runs through our veins, inspire us with love for country, love for truth, love indeed for everything that is great, noble and sublime in human nature ? Descendants of the ancient Aryans of India ! will you not prove yourselves worthy of your lineage, worthy of the great name you inherit ? Gentlemen, I have learnt the lessons of history in vain, if I could not predict a great future for my country. We may not indeed live to see that day. But let us work, gentlemen, harmoniously together to lay the foundation-stone of the fabric of Indian greatness.

THE STUDY

INDIAN HISTORY.

The following address on the Study of Indian History was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea at the Anniversary Meeting of the Young Men's Union, held on the 24th June 1876 at the house of Babu Krista Mohan Mullick, Calcutta. Babu Bhoirub Chunder Banerjea, B.L., *Pleader, High Court, was in the Chair.*

GENTLEMEN,

Those who have their eyes open, and are capable of observing what is going on around us, cannot fail to be painfully impressed with a fact, which we would all do well seriously to ponder over. We have amongst us writers in almost all the varied branches of human knowledge. We have poets, novelists, critics, translators, writers on law, mathematics, philosophy, and even on some of the abstruse branches of physical science. But there is one great department of human knowledge, which remains almost wholly unexplored by us, yet it is a department which would yield treasures of priceless value to the ardent inquirer, where we would roam amongst the relics of our former greatness, where we would hold communion with the master minds of ancient India, with Vâlmiki and Vyâsa, Pânini and Patanjali, Gautama and Sankarâchârya. I purpose this evening, gentlemen, to draw your attention to this noble study, the

study of the history of our own country. I purpose to point out its multifarious advantages. I purpose to show that the study of the history of our own country, while, perhaps, it cannot be said to possess that facinating interest, which belongs to those branches of human knowledge which have reference to the amelioration of the miseries, or the promotion of the happiness of our race, nevertheless, presents topics of deep and living interest, and round which, the heart of the truly genuine patriot might cling with devout and reverential affection. The study of the history of our own country illustrates in a striking manner the great truth, that miserable and degraded as we are, our degradation has followed upon a chain of sequences, every link of which is explicable, that the iron hand of fate has not been upon us, that we have not been made the hopeless victims of unprecedented calamities, and that whereas circumstances have wholly controlled our destinies, we might, if we chose, have partially controlled those circumstances, and thus have changed the face of India, and perhaps of the world at large. Such an assurance is calculated to fill us with hope, to inspire us with enthusiasm and to add stimulous to those noble and patriotic efforts, which are being made on all sides around, and which seem to me to be typical of a regenerated nationality into which, I fervently hope, we are now about to enter.

But a difficulty of considerable magnitude meets us on the very threshold of our inquiry. We find that in the whole field of Sanskrit Literature there is only a single historical work, the Raja-Tarangini or the History of Cashmere, which was commenced by Calhana Pundit about the middle of the 12th century of the Christian era. Are we then to conclude, that our ancestors, the great Aryans of ancient India, were ignorant of the art of historical composition and never wrote histories? I would ask you, gentle-

men, to approach the consideration of this question with a mind free from prejudice and bias. Let us in this case appeal from the verdict of sentiment to the verdict of sober reason, and if, perchance, that verdict should go against our ancestors, it would then be our duty to submit to it with deference, although it might be with regret. Fortunately, however, for the credit of our ancestors, fortunately for the good name of India, we are not wholly driven to that conclusion ; and with the arguments I am about to submit for your consideration, it will appear extremely probable, that our ancestors were acquainted with the art of historical composition, that they wrote histories, and that if such histories have not come down to us, it is because of the revolutions and convulsions which our country had unhappily too often to pass through, it is because of the carelessness of the Brahmins, and the peculiarities of our climate.

Gentlemen, India, emerges upon the pages of authentic history, as forming a satrapy of the great Empire of Darius, and ever since that time, her condition has not improved for the better. The Empire of the Kshatriyas was succeeded by the Empire of Mussalmans, the Empire of the Mussalmans by the Empire of the Mahrattas, and the Empire of Britain has succeeded and overshadowed them all. Bands of fanatical warriors, enticed by the matchless grandeur and beauty of our country, enticed by the reports of her extraordinary wealth, again and again, poured down upon the fertile plains of Hindustan, spreading death, destruction, desolation, on all sides around. Now, it is my contention, that it was amidst these destructive inroads, that all traces of our ancient historical literature disappeared ; and I am all the more fortified in this conclusion, when I bear in mind, that a great many Sanskrit works have not come down to us at all, while there are others which have come down to

us only in a fragmentary state. What had been left unfinished by these destructive inroads, was completed by the carelessness of Brahmins (who were the custodians of all Sanskrit works), and the peculiarities of our climate.

I now pass on gentlemen, to the consideration of those arguments which, in my humble opinion, make it appear extremely probable, that our ancestors were familiar with the art of historical composition, and that they wrote histories.

My first argument will be of a presumptive character. Is it at all consistent to reason, that our ancestors who made such great progress in the different branches of human knowledge, in literature, in science, in philosophy, were ignorant of the simple art of recording the sayings and doings of their kings and queens, for that is properly history in its inception? The different branches of human knowledge are interwoven with one another, and is it possible to make any great progress in any one branch, without making some progress in—throwing some light on—the other branches of human knowledge? How, again, are we to reconcile this absolute ignorance in respect of historical composition, this utter want of all historical literature, with the wonderful achievements of the Hindus in some of the most difficult and abstruse department of human learning—in law, in philosophy and in astronomy?

But, gentlemen, let us pass on from this presumptive argument and tread on firmer ground. You have all heard of Abul Fazl, the renowned minister of Akber. Well, he wrote an outline of the ancient History of India. Monsieur Abel Remusat very pertinently asks the question, whence did Abul Fazl obtain the materials for his History of India? If he did not draw them from his imagination, he must have obtained them from earlier Hindoo authorities.

But there is yet another argument, still more clenching. About the beginning of the 7th century of the Christian èra,

a great Chinese traveller visited India. His name was Hiouen Thsang. He was a Buddhist priest, and came here on a pilgrimage to Magadha, the Holy Land of his Faith. He was a man of remarkable intelligence, of great powers of observation and of profound genius. He stayed in India for a period of nearly 15 years, and while here, he chiefly employed himself in studying Sanskrit Literature, in transcribing Buddhist Scriptures, and in acquainting himself with the manners, customs and institutions of that great and interesting people in whose midst he found himself. Hiouen Thsang's travels have now been translated into French by Monsieur Stanislas Julien. Let us see what light the great Chinese traveller throws upon this important point. He says, there were special functionaries charged with the duty of writing the narrative of events ; and these narratives were known as the Nilapita or the Blue Collection. But what are narratives of events, if not, histories ? Here, then, we have the testimony of a writer of unquestioned veracity, of remarkable intelligence, and who had unexceptionable opportunities of observation, in support of the conclusion I am endeavouring to establish, *viz.*, that our ancestors were probably familiar with the art of historical composition, and that they wrote histories.

But, gentlemen, there remains yet another argument. You have all probably heard of Chand and his bardic poems. Well, Chand is the bard, who relates the exploits of Prithi Raj, that noble Hindoo, the last of his race, who died bleeding on the alter of his country's independence. Chand refers to other bardic poems, which were extant in his day, but which have not come down to our times. Thus, then, it appears that, not long ago, in the history of our country, these bardic poems occupied a considerable space in our Literature. But what are bardic poems but undeveloped history ? If we had undeveloped history amongst us, is it

not only too probable, that we also had "developed" and real history? What dire stroke of fate was it, I ask, that cut short the growth of the Hindoo mind in this direction, while in other departments of human knowledge, it marched forward with almost giant strides?

Thus, then, gentlemen, from this series of arguments, from the presumptive argument to which I have already referred, from the inference drawn from Abul Fazl's outlines of ancient India, from the testimony of Hiouen Thsang with regard to the Nilapita, and finally from the existence of the bardic poems of Chand and other bards, it appears to me very probable that our ancestors were familiar with the art of historical composition, and that they wrote histories.

But the question might be asked, and indeed it would be a most pertinent question to ask—how are we to explain this singular fact, that while we have Sanskrit works in almost all the branches of human knowledge, which have survived the destructive inroads to which I have already referred, not a single historical work has been preserved, not a single historical work bearing upon it the impress of ancient India, has come down to us? I have an explanation to offer, but whether that explanation is to be regarded as satisfactory or not is a point which it is for you to decide. The functionaries, charged with the duty of writing the narrative of events, were government servants. They were entertained by the state. The Nilapita were government records, and would be deposited with other government records, in the palace or the castle. But India, in those days, was the scene of constant revolutions, of constant bloodshed and of constant changes of dynasty. The castle and the palace would be the central points of attack. They would again and again be assailed, their treasures ransacked and their records destroyed. The Nilapita would thus come to be destroyed, together with other government records. All traces of our early annals would thus disappear.

But, gentlemen, even if it should appear that our ancestors were ignorant of the art of historical composition, it is after all, a matter of not so very great discredit to them. For, history in the proper sense of the term was not known even in Europe, till late in the last century. It was amidst the intellectual ferment and agitation, which preceded the breaking out of that great revolution, the French Revolution, which ushered in the dawn of human liberty, and impelled the human mind onwards by giant strides to unknown conquests in unknown regions of thought, that history, in the proper sense of the word, began to be studied.

But, gentlemen, whether our ancestors were familiar with the art of historical composition or not, it becomes a matter of the utmost importance, that we should seriously set ourselves to the task of studying the history of our own country. I hope, every one of you here is a patriot, every one of you has a heart that beats in sympathetic response to the miseries of an unhappy fatherland. If you seriously wish to regenerate your country, wish to see her great and prosperous, then you must have a thorough knowledge of the evils that beset her, the miseries that afflict her. First, learn the disease before you minister to the patient. But the miseries that afflict India, the disease she is suffering from, are not the work of a day. Their roots stretch back into the remote past. The past must be studied, before the work of Indian regeneration could be accomplished. Thus then, the patriot who really wishes to serve his country, must study its past history. But the study of Indian history is important, considered from another point of view. The policy of the English Government in India is profoundly influencing the fortunes of this country, and is not without its effects upon the national character. If, therefore, we desire to understand the policy of the British Government in India, it becomes necessary that we should study the history of our own country.

Gentlemen, while upon this subject, I cannot refrain from alluding, for a few moments, to the manner in which sometimes Indian histories are written by English authors. Gentlemen, in the remarks I am about to address you, I do not mean to cast any reflection upon those great and good Englishmen, who have done so much towards elucidating the history of our country. Nobody could be more sensible than myself of the obligations we are all under to these eminent writers. Nobody could be more sensible than myself of the difficulties of their task, difficulties which in their case were enhanced by the circumstance, that they were foreigners, writing the history of a country of which they could know but little. But although our obligations to English writers may be very great, we own still higher obligations to truth; and in the interests of truth, it becomes our duty to point out what we conceive to be their errors and their shortcomings.

Gentlemen, it seems to be taken for granted, by most* English writers, that Suraja Dowlah was the author of the Black Hole tragedy. It is no part of my intention, to whitewash the ensanguined fame of a Suraja. I do not wish to paint him in brighter colours than he deserves. I am only anxious, that justice should be done to him. The benignant goddess of justice never appears to so much advantage, as when she spreads her wings of protection over those who least deserve such protection. I say then, let justice be done, though a Suraja Dowlah were concerned in the matter. Now, I hold, gentlemen, that Suraja was not concerned in the Black Hole tragedy, or if he was at all concerned, it was as an accessory after the fact.

In order that I may establish this position, I beg of you to dwell with me for a few moments, on the events of the ever-memorable 20th. of June 1756. On that day, Fort William

* I should rather say, "some" as, for instance, Murray and Sewell.

fell. After the capture of the Fort, Mr. Holwell and about 146 other English prisoners were brought before the presence of Suraja Dowlah, bound and fettered. Suraja ordered their chains to be removed, and assured Mr. Holwell, that no harm would be done to him or to his comrades. At night, when the Nabab had retired to rest, a difficulty arose as to finding a commodious place, where all the prisoners might be safely lodged. The garrison prison was at last fixed upon. It was a small room, about 18 feet square. Into this miserable little place, the hundred and forty-six English prisoners were thrust, in one of the most sultry nights of June. We are all familiar with the terrible events of that awful night, and however much we may desire to exculpate Suraja, we cannot help expressing the deepest sympathy for the fate of those unhappy Englishmen, who were subjected to a punishment, so cruel, and in many respects, so undeserved. The morning dawned, and revealed the ghastly tale. Of the 146 prisoners, only 23 survived, to tell the story of their unutterable sufferings. Now, I ask, gentlemen, what is there to shew that the Nabab was in any way concerned in this foul transaction? It is not even pretended that he gave the order. It is admitted that he was asleep, while the prisoners were undergoing the terrible agonies of their incarceration. Indeed, there is nothing to shew that he knew anything at all about the tragedy, till it was past and irremediable. Was the feeling of kindliness, I ask, which prompted him to order the removal of the fetters from the English prisoners, consistent with the horrible cruelty which he is alleged to have committed almost immediately after? If he really wanted to massacre the 146 prisoners, would he have allowed twenty-three of them to escape, to spread the tale of his monstrous crime and of their own unutterable sufferings? But it might be asked how was it, that if he was not in any way implicated in this foul tragedy, he did not hasten to punish its

perpetrators. Suraja Dowlah, it must be remembered, was an Eastern Prince, and was one of the worst of his class. He never had any fine sensibility of feeling. On the contrary, the training he had received was such as was calculated to crush out and destroy all the noble qualities of the human heart. Brought up in the school of intemperance, of dissipation, of godlessness, he never knew what it was to sympathize with human misery or human suffering. His courtiers had taught him to think that he was the lord of the universe, and that the rest of mankind had been created to minister to his happiness and to his comfort. Such being his training and his mental temperament, he possibly looked upon the whole affair as a good joke, and its authors as those who had contributed towards his enjoyment.*

The next blunder which is often committed by English writers of Indian history, and to which I would draw your attention, is in connection with the events which preceded the breaking out of the second Sikh war. Most English writers hold, that the Sikhs were entirely responsible for the second Sikh war, and that, therefore, the annexation of their country was but the proper punishment of their ingratitude and their disloyalty. The Sikhs, they say, were living under British protection. They rebelled against the Paramount Power. They were worsted in the struggle. The annexation

* But even if Suraja Dowlah were the real author of the Black Hole tragedy, we should not, perhaps, be too severe in condemning him. Nearly fifty years before his time, a tragedy of a blacker character and of a deeper dye had been perpetrated by a much more enlightened sovereign, and amongst a much more enlightened people. But the Massacre of Glencoe (in which fraud and treachery were combined with murder) can scarcely be said to dim the lustre of William the Third's reign, while the Black-Hole tragedy is regarded as the climax of a life of crime, of folly, and of iniquity. But if historians find enough in the character and achievements of William to atone for the massacre of Glencoe, then surely the youth of Suraja Dowla, the difficulties of his situation, and the circumstances under which he was brought up, ought to go far to induce us to take a lenient view of his follies and his crimes.

of their country followed as a natural consequence. Now, I hold, gentlemen, that the English were almost as much responsible for the second Sikh war as the Sikhs themselves. The Sikhs were, indeed, goaded into rebellion. Three events chiefly stimulated the Sikhs to revolt, yet these events are not mentioned by most English writers, and for them the English government was responsible. They were (1) The exile of the Maharani Jhunda Koer, the widow of the great Runjeet Singh, to whose memory the Sikhs were so devotedly attached. (2) The unwillingness of the British authorities to fix a day for the marriage of the young Maharaja Dhuleep Sing, a circumstance which served to fill the Sikhs with apprehension with regard to the stability of their kingdom. (3) The treatment of Sirdar Chutter Singh, the father of the Raja Sher Singh, one of the most powerful of the Sikh chieftains. These circumstances, gentlemen, filled the Sikhs with apprehension, with regard to the continuance of the independence of their country. They likewise smarted under the indignities which were freely heaped upon one of the most exalted personages in the land. Under the influence of these feelings, created by the proceedings of the English Government, the Sikhs rose in arms against the power that had undertaken to protect them. Who will now say that the Sikhs were wholly responsible for the breaking out of the second Sikh war, and that the English were not at all to blame in the matter?

The last historical blunder to which I would draw your attention, is in connection with the annexation of Oude. English writers, for the most part, agree in the opinion that Oude was grievously misgoverned under the native dynasty, and that, therefore, the protecting power felt itself called upon to annex the country. Now, gentlemen, the misgovernment of Oude appears to me to have been a myth, and not borne out by well-established facts. If Oude were

misgoverned, it would be only natural to expect that the people of Oude would emigrate in large numbers to British territory which bordered upon Oude. But there was no such emigration. On the contrary, the stream of emigration tended the other way.* What then shall we say of the misgovernment in Oude? But this is not all. You are probably aware that in the year 1801 Lord Wellesley helped himself to a large slice out of Oude, annexed nearly half of that country. Well, we find on the eve of the annexation (1853), and I have Colonel Sleeman's authority for the remark, that whereas the landed aristocracy of Oude under the government of the Nabab remained unimpaired, not a single family of the landed aristocracy remained in British Oude. They had been systematically crushed out. Such a fact as this, leads us to form a very unfavourable opinion with regard to the manner in which the British government in this country is carried on, and ought to make us pause before we feel too certain about the misgovernment in Oude. There remains yet another argument of considerable weight, which has been brought forward, I believe, by Mr. Herman Merivale in the second volume of his Life of Sir Henry Lawrence.† In the

* "It may naturally be supposed," says General Outram (Oude Blue Book p. 44), "that the people of Oude, if so greatly oppressed, as has been represented, would emigrate to the neighbouring British districts, which it does not appear, from the replies I have yet received from the magistrates, whom I questioned on the subject, that they do to any great extent."

† I subjoin the following passage from Herman Merivale's Life of Sir Henry Lawrence, to show that I had not, perhaps, stated the case strongly enough:—

"Such is the description of Oude (a description in which Oude is represented as being covered with thickets of prickly pear, and jungles of bamboo and thorn) before 1853, as drawn by a champion of annexation. Let us tone it down by the application of statistics. Oude contains about 25,000 square miles English; in other words it nearly equals in area the kingdoms of the Netherlands and Belgium together. Sir Henry Lawrence estimated its population (1845) at three millions, a considerable relative number, but (as it turns

year 1870, a census was taken of Oude, and from that census it was found that Oude was quite as thickly populated as the most thickly populated countries in Europe,—the Netherlands. Now between 1856 and 1870, Oude had passed through a terrible convulsion. Oude was one of the centres of the mutiny. Her towns had been destroyed, her inhabitants massacred, her fields laid waste. Therefore, it is only reasonable to conclude that Oude was at least as thickly populated in 1856, as it was in 1870. But how is that reconcileable with the terrible picture of havoc, desolation, and ruin, drawn by a succession of Residents ?* Thus then, with these facts before me I am led to conclude, that the misgovernment in Oude was a plea put forward to justify an act of spoliation.

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out) very greatly below the mark. Three or four years ago, it was ascertained to contain eight millions, showing a density equal to that of the two countries aforesaid, the best peopled in Europe; and the annual Blue Book, entitled *moral and material progress of India*, for 1869-1870, fixes it at the almost incredible number of eleven millions and a half, or nearly five hundred to the square mile. And yet, to the causes of desolation so rhetorically enumerated in the passage I have quoted, there was afterwards added the Mutiny with its ravages and disastrous results. And British Government, whatever magic we may attribute to it, cannot have had time, in the few years which have since elapsed, to effect any miraculous change.

Common justice will, therefore, compel us, who have no special political cause to defend with the energy with which sides are usually taken in Indian politics, to own that Oude when we annexed it, was a wealthy, populous, commercial region, which might fairly hold a comparison in these respects with many portions of our adjacent empire. Mis-governed it had been, and disgracefully, but not to that extent which really comes home to the mass of the population, and paralyzes industry." (Merivale's Life of Sir Henry Lawrence Vol. II., p. 288).

* The cry of the mis-government in Oude, was very popular with a certain class of officials throughout the greater part of this century. Bishop Heber who visited Oude in 1824-25, thus notices the subject:—"We had heard much of the mis-governed and desolate state of the kingdom of Oude;" * * * "I was pleased, however, and surprised after all which I had heard of Oude, to find the country so completely under the plough."

Up to this time, gentlemen, my attention has been confined to what might be called the objective advantages to be derived from the study of the history of our own country. I now pass on to the consideration of some of the subjective advantages, advantages affecting the human mind, to be derived from the study of the history of our own country. The study of the history of our own country, and indeed the study of all history, is calculated to restrain the exuberance of the imagination. Gentlemen, we are an eminently imaginative people; and I think I do not exaggerate facts, when I say, that the exuberance of our imagination and our want of practical sagacity, have greatly interfered with our success as a nation. If we have to talk of human longevity, we cannot be content with less than about 100,000 years, if we have to talk of a Rakshasa, we must represent him with nostrils several thousands miles long, if we have to

Mr. Shore thus refers to the subject. "This opinion" (the misgovernment in Oude) "is deduced first from the reports and statement of the different Residents at Lucknow, derived from their sycophant dependants. I believe many of them have officially given opinions quite at variance with their private sentiments, satisfying their consciences by representing them as having been derived from conversations with the people, without discriminating what class of natives were the informants.*** I have travelled over several parts of Oude and can testify, as far as my own observation went, that it is fully cultivated, according to the population. Between Khanpur (Cawnpur) and Lucknow, numbers must daily pass, who can confirm or deny this statement. Let them declare whether any portion of land there, lies waste which is fit for cultivation. I have known many officers who have been stationed at Seetapore and have made excursions into the neighbouring parts:- without an exception, they described the country as a garden. In the number of cattle, horses, and goods which they possess, and in the appearance of their houses and clothes, the people are in no points worse, in many, better off than our own subjects. The wealth of Lucknow, not merely of those in authority but the property of the bankers and the shop-keepers, is far superior to that of any city (Calcutta perhaps excepted) in the British dominions; so at least the native bankers and merchants who are pretty good judges of such matters universally assert. How can all this be the case, if the government is really so notorious for tyranny and oppression." Shore on Indian affairs Vol I., p.p. 152 and 156. Read the whole Chapter)

speculate about the antiquity of the Vedas and the Institutes of Manu, we must make them several millions of years old. Now, I say, gentlemen, that next to physical science, I know of no subject which is so well calculated to restrain the exuberance of our imagination as the study of history.

But there remains yet another subjective advantage, to be derived from the study of Indian History, of greater moment and wider import than the one to which I have already referred. The study of the history of our own country furnishes the strongest incentive, to the loftiest patriotism. I ask, what Hindoo is there, who does not feel himself a nobler being altogether, as he recalls to mind the proud list of his illustrious countrymen, graced by the thrice-immortal names of a Valmiki and a Vyasa, a Panini and a Patanjali, a Gautama and a Sankaracharya? I ask, what Hindoo is there, whose patriotism is not stimulated, whose self-respect is not increased, as he contemplates the past history of his country? For ours was a most glorious past. We were great in literature, in science, in war, but above all, great in morals. I would detain you for hours and hours together, were I to expatiate upon the points of beauty and excellence connected with the wonderful language and literature of our fathers. But, I think, gentlemen, I should more profitably occupy your time, if I were to pass on to the consideration of some of those scientific truths, which the ancient Aryans of India have bequeathed to us as a priceless legacy.

Well then, our ancestors were the inventors of the decimal notation; and without the decimal notation, the world could not go on for a day. It is of use in the pettiest commercial computations, as well as in the most difficult astronomical calculations. The ancient Hindoos made considerable progress in the science of geometry, and in trigonometry, enunciated problems which were not known even in Europe till about the 16th century. But it is in the

science of algebra that the Hindoo mind displayed to the best advantage its marvellous power and resources. The Hindoos were the inventors of the science of algebra. The first Arab writer on algebra was Mahomed Musa Kharizmi. Now, there could be no doubt that he obtained his algebra from the Hindoos. He abridged an astronomical work founded upon the Indian system, and he was the first to communicate to his countrymen the Indian method of computation. A writer who knew so much of Indian mathematics, who was familiar with our astronomy and our method of computation, might reasonably be presumed to have been familiar with our algebra as well. Indeed the Arabs do not lay any claims to originality in this respect. And it also appears that the Greeks were indebted to the Hindoos for their algebra. The first Greek writer on algebra was Diophantus. And we have strong reasons for believing that Diophantus is under very great obligations to the Hindoos for his algebra. In 1579, Bombelli published a treatise on algebra. Bombelli says, in this work, that he had translated a part of Diophantus, and found that Diophantus cites Indian authorities. Thus then, Diophantus was familiar with the Indian writers on algebra, and as he often cites them as his authorities, it must be presumed that he was greatly indebted to them.

Passing now from the domain of mathematics, let us dwell for a few moments on the achievements of the Hindoos in some of the other departments of science. The Hindoos had made considerable progress in chemistry. They knew how to prepare sulphuric acid, nitric acid, muriatic acid, and a great many other chemical substances. We have also good reasons for believing that the Arabs got their chemistry from the Hindoos; and it was the Arabs who first introduced chemistry into Europe. We are thus then driven to the conclusion, that that great science whose wonderful results

fill the world with so much admiration, and which have contributed in no small degree to promote human happiness and ameliorate human suffering, was of Indian origin. Nor were the Hindoos behind-hand as regards the science of medicine. The Arabs openly acknowledge their obligations to our ancestors in this respect. Indeed, so great was their respect for the Hindoo physicians, that two of their number, Saleh and Manka, were retained at the court of Harunal-Rashed.

But the Hindoos were not only great in literature, in science, they were likewise great in war. The Hindoo books treat of the subject of tactics. The division of the army into centre, flank, wings and reserve, was recognised. Rules are laid down for the order of march and the choice of position. The subject of encampment also received attention.

But the point which possesses the deepest interest in connection with Hindoo military science, is the question as to whether our ancestors had any knowledge of fire-arms. Sir Henry Elliot and perhaps also Professor Wilson, incline to the view that the ancient Hindus were acquainted with the use of fire-arms. Sir Henry Elliot conjectures that they were of an explosive character. The opinions of Wilson and Elliot derive considerable support from the testimony of Greek authors:—from the testimony of Philostratus, of Themistius, of Ctesias and Œlian. But, gentlemen, in spite of the weight which must always belong to the opinions of such eminent oriental scholars as Wilson and Elliot, I am led to believe from arguments,* which, I am afraid, time

* These arguments are as follows :—If the ancient Hindoos were familiar with the use of fire-arms of any kind, how came they to lose all such knowledge? Is it at all likely, considering the advantages which such a knowledge would confer, that they should ever have forgotten the use of fire-arms, and forgotten it so completely that it is now a matter of warm discussion, as to whether they ever possessed any such knowledge? The

will not permit me to enter into, that our ancestors had probably no knowledge of fire-arms.

But the ancient Hindoos were not only great in literature, great in science, great in war, they were, above all, great in morals. If our country had produced no other great man than Sakya Muni, I conceive we should have been entitled to the gratitude of posterity. The two greatest characters that have adorned the annals of humanity are undoubtedly Jesus Christ and Sakya Muni. It will not be for me to institute any comparison between these two illustrious worthies of our race. Mine will not be the hand that will tear down the veil of sanctity with which the veneration of ages has enshrouded these gifted mortals. I am more concerned here to-night to point out the moral grandeur of ancient India, as typified and exemplified in the life of the great founder of Buddhism. Have the pages of history a nobler instance of self-sacrifice to record than that of Sakya Muni? Born the heir to a magnificent principality, with troops of servants

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necessity there would be, in a rude and turbulent age, of constantly taking the field, whether for purposes of offence or defence, would keep up and improve the knowledge of fire-arms, and it is easy to see how upon such knowledge the national existence would often depend. Unless, therefore, a satisfactory explanation is given, as to how the Hindoos came to lose all knowledge of fire-arms, we are afraid, we must conclude that fire-arms were not known amongst them. Then again, we know that it was the bow which the ancient Hindoos chiefly relied upon in the field of battle. Now, if they possessed any kind of fire-arms, it seems scarcely likely that they should have given the preference to a weapon, infinitely inferior in point of usefulness to fire-arms. Finally, we know that from the earliest times elephants formed an important part in the Indian army. Now this could hardly have been the case, if fire-arms were in use. The great objection to employing elephants in modern warfare, is that they are apt to take fright at the report of guns. Unless, therefore, we suppose that the nature of elephants has, in these modern times, undergone a complete change, they could not have been employed so much in the field as the ancient Aryans appear to have done.

The above points seem to require explanation, before we should feel ourselves at liberty to accept the views of Elliot and Wilson.

to obey his behests, with a loving wife and affectionate parents, he resolved to forswear the temptations of his lofty position, to rise high above them, and to consecrate his life and his energies to the great task of preaching to the benighted nations of the earth, the saving lessons of truth and religion. High mountains, broad rivers, impervious forests, the horrors of the stake, the sword of the executioner, the knife of the assassin, presented no obstacles to the slow, the silent, the steady progress of the religion of Gautama Buddha. From the frozen waters that skirt the coast of Kamaschatka to the extreme south of the island of Ceylon, from the green and verdant isles that fringe the Chinese seas to the arid Steppes of Central Asia, Buddhism became the predominating religion. The shivering inhabitant of Siberia, the yellow-complexioned Chinese, the swarthy native of Ceylon, the semi-naked barbarian of the Steppes, all acknowledged the great Hindoo as their apostle. Gentlemen, Sakya Muni was a Hindoo, and so are we; but I ask, where is his heroic and noble self-endurance, where his soul of fire, his heart of love, embracing within its bounds not only man but the whole range of animated beings, aught that could breathe, aught that could feel from the meanest protoplasm to man, the lord of creation? I ask you, gentlemen, whether standing in his presence, standing in the presence of this noble Hindoo, this illustrious scion, of a royal race, who flung away the splendours of a throne, in order that he might become the apostle of humanity you do not feel something of his noble and heroic self-endurance, something of his fervid patriotism, something of his boundless love for mankind? If you do not, then I say, call not yourselves the countrymen of Sakya Muni, pride not yourselves on the splendour of his immortal achievements. There is a higher consanguinity than that of blood, a nobler relationship than that of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, the consanguinity,—the

relationship which arises from the unity and the harmony of sentiments, views and aspirations. If the noble example of Sakya Muni does not stimulate your patriotism and increase your self-respect, then, I say, you are not his countrymen though the same blood runs through your veins, the same sun warms you, the same moon emparadises your nights and the same vaulted canopy of heaven, bespangled with its myriads of stars, spreads like a pall over your head.

But, gentlemen, besides Sakya Muni, there were other lights, though not so bright or so gorgeous, which shone on the Indian firmament. It is not necessary that I should allude to them. Contemporary testimony is indeed unequivocal with regard to the moral excellence of the ancient Indians. I dare say, you have all heard of Arrian. He is the historian of Alexander's Indian expedition. Well, Arrian says in his Indica—and I quote this remark with a degree of pride and satisfaction, more to be conceived than described—Arrian says that "No Indian was ever known to tell an untruth." This statement has been regarded as an exaggeration, and that even by so accomplished a scholar as Mr. Cowell. But it finds corroboration from a new and almost unexpected quarter. I have already had occasion to remark that, about the beginning of the 7th century of the Christian era, the great Chinese traveller, Hiouen Thsang visited India. Hiouen Thsang, we have already seen, had unexceptionable opportunities of forming a correct judgment with regard to Indian affairs. Well then, the following is Hiouen Thsang's estimate of the Indian character. He says—"The Indians might be fickle, they might be frivolous, they might be volatile, but they knew not what fraud was." Thus, then, gentlemen, we have the testimony of two writers, separated by age, separated by country, separated by religion, separated by traditions, associations, habits and institutions, separated, in short, by every thing that constitutes the

difference between man and man, uniting to speak in support of the character for truthfulness which our Aryan forefathers bore. And is it possible, in the face of the concurrent testimony of two such witnesses, witnesses whose reputation for veracity is so high, and one of whom, at least, had ample opportunities of forming a correct judgment about the Indian character, to regard the statement of Arrian, as an exaggeration? No, gentlemen, our ancestors were a most truthful people. They were likewise one of the bravest nations on the face of the earth. Arrian says, they were the bravest soldiers that Alexander encountered on the plains of Asia. In short, as regards everything that constitutes real manliness of character, as regards every thing that constitutes true nobility of disposition, the Indians of those days outstripped all Asiatic races and have become the model for our guidance and our imitation.

Our great epic poems—the Ramayana and the Mahabharata—are a monument of the moral worth of our ancestors. Where shall we find a nobler character than that of a Rama or of a Yudisthira? Where shall we find sublimer precepts of morality, than those taught in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata? The solemnity of pledges, the great duty of filial obedience, the absolute necessity of self-sacrifice in the discharge of solemn obligations, the supreme virtue of chastity, the sacredness of truth, heinousness of perjury, are all enforced with a degree of eloquence, of pathos, of sincerity, of depth of conviction, as cannot fail to leave an impression on the mind of even the most careless reader of the Ramayana. The Puranas say "The world can not bear a liar." The Ramayana quotes the remark with approbation. When Rama visits Agastya Muni in his hermitage, the great sage tells him that the perjurer feeds on his own flesh in the next word. But no, gentlemen, "Megasthenes," a correspondent of the *Pioneer*, in a letter that he writes

to that Journal would have us believe that the morality of the Waverly novels and of Shakespeare's writings will do more to regenerate India than the morality of the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Aye forsooth, the morality of Shakespeare's Edmund and of Scott's Wildrake, will do more to regenerate India than the noble lessons taught in the lives of Rama and Yudisthira! We do not want such instructors as "Megasthenes," who would rob us of that last consolation left to a fallen and degraded people, the consolation to be derived from the contemplation of our past glories.

Gentlemen, let us sit at the feet of our ancestors and hold communion with the master minds of ancient India. Such communion is pleasing in these days of gubernatorial repression, in these days of political lifelessness and political stagnation, and when the future out-look is indeed so truly gloomy. I am aware, gentlemen, that in studying the past history of your country, you will find much that is antiquated, much that is obsolete, much, perhaps, that will excite ridicule and laughter. But let not any such feeling overcome you. Approach reverentially the sacred records of your sires. Remember, that you are studying the sayings and doings of your revered ancestors, of those for whose sake alone you are now remembered, for whose sake alone the intellectual *elite* of Europe even now feel a deep and an ardent interest in your welfare. If you cannot attain the intellectual eminence of your ancestors, why not strive to emulate their moral grandeur. The road to moral greatness is not so steep, or so slippery. And permit me to remind you, that upon the moral regeneration of your country depends its intellectual, its social, and its political regeneration. But the home is the fountain-head of morality. From one's home is derived the impetus to glorious deeds and noble achievements. Let not, then, the clear and pellucid stream of morality be polluted at its very source.

I am afraid, gentlemen, there are fathers who seem to think that all they have got to do in reference to their children, is to send them to school, and that after that they may lead as dissolute, as abandoned and as unprincipled a life, as they please. I wish to remind such parents that their examples are certain to produce a profound and a most pernicious impression on the minds of their children. I am anxious to remind them that if they wish well to their children, if they wish to see them prosper in life and acquit themselves as the worthy citizens of a great country, then it is for them to set in their own lives an example of high character and honourable dealing. Then, indeed, would they have paved the way for the moral regeneration of this country. Then, indeed, would they have established on a solid basis, their claims to the lasting gratitude of their children.

Gentlemen, I invite you to this noble task the moral regeneration of your country, a task, in every way worthy of your highest ambition ; and I am greatly mistaken in the character of my friends, in the character of my countrymen and in the character of those who are gathered together here this evening, if I can not assure myself of a cordial and hearty response. If you indeed accomplish this noble task, your names will be emblazoned in characters of gold in the ineffaceable pages of history and will be handed down to remote posterity to receive the countless blessings of unborn generations. Gentlemen, you have your choice between a life of active and patriotic duty and a life of indifference, of carelessness, of disregard of sacred obligations. Countrymen of Valmiki and Vyasa, make your choice, and whether you choose the one line of conduct or the other, remember the hopes of posterity are centred in you and that your great fathers from their high places in heaven are looking down upon you. Oh, Shades of departed sires!—Spirits of the mighty dead of ancient India! where are ye? Oh, cheer us,

comfort us, enlighten us, illumine the darkness of our path, so that we might know what course of patriotic duty to adopt, and thus hasten the dawn of a bright of a glorious and of a noble day upon our country. Gentlemen, with your eyes reverentially fixed upon the past, with your hopes centred in the future, pursue your course of patriotic duty, and you would be entitled to the gratitude of your children and your children's children, even unto remote generations.

CHAITANYA.

The following lecture on Chaitanya was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea, at a Meeting of the Students' Association, held on the 15th July 1876 in the Hall of the London Missionary Society's Institution, Bhowanipore, Calcutta. The Reverend J. P. ASHTON, M. A., *the Principal of the Institution was in the Chair.*

GENTLEMEN,

When sometime ago, I was asked by the secretary to deliver an address at a meeting of this association, I felt that it was a request which I could not very well refuse, I felt that it was a call to duty which I must respond to. I regard your association and other associations of a similar nature as the index of that intellectual ferment and agitation which is going on around us ; and if I read aright the lessons of history, I venture to predict that this intellectual ferment is but the prelude to a still mightier political ferment and agitation, in the midst of which, and under the auspices of a beneficent government such as that we have over us now, I fervently hope our longlost rights and privileges would be restored to us. It is because, gentlemen, I regard your association as calculated to stimulate the intellect, and to foster and keep up that spirit of discussion which paves the way for all genuine social and political reforms, that it was with no ordinary pleasure I responded to the appeal that had been made to me.

Though I had no hesitation whatever in making up my mind to deliver an address here, I was not quite so sure about the choice of my subject. But after all, it seemed to me that I should best discharge my duty here were I to present to you, in as brief and succint a manner as I possibly could, separated from an interminable mass of legends and fables, the life, character and achievements of the greatest Bengali of modern times, the life, character and achievements of him who has left for us an example of an unsullied purity of character, of an unselfish self-sacrifice, and a steadfast allegiance to duty, such as perhaps are rare in the annals of our race. But the life of Chaitanya presents to us Bengalis points of the deepest interest and attraction. There we see painted before us, in all the vividness of great reality, the picture of what a Bengali might achieve and that amidst trials, amidst sufferings, amidst difficulties of appalling magnitude. Standing by the tomb of this great man, we learn a lesson which we would all do well to treasure up in the recesses of our minds, that a nation which is capable of producing Chaitanya need not despair of its future destinies. Let faint-hearted patriots and desponding misanthropes contemplate the sublime achievements of Chaitanya, and then let them dare, if they have still the courage left, to despair of the destinies of our race.

Chaitanya was born in the year 1485. He was thus two years older than another great reformer who flourished about the same time, I refer to Martin Luther. Mankind delight in narrating wonderful incidents connected with the birth or death of their great men; and this element was not wanting in the case of Chaitanya. Portents are said to have accompanied his birth, and his entrance to the world is said to have been signalized by the termination of an eclipse. But we can afford to pass over these miraculous incidents, considering the glorious realities of his splendid career.

The family came from Sylhet. His grand-father Upendra Misra was a native of Sylhet. His father Jaggannath Misra, impelled by piety and by a desire to be near the sacred stream of the Bhagirathi, had removed with his family to Nuddea. Jaggannath was the father of a numerous family, of whom Chaitayna was the most illustrious. Chaitanya had a brother Vishwarupa who, as we shall see, became a Vaishnava ascetic. Many marvellous stories are told with regard to the early life of the future apostle of Vaishnavism. But let us pass them over. It is certain that Chaitanya received the benefits of a sound and thorough education in the Sanskrit language and literature ; and that his youthful precocity excited wonder and curiosity. On the death of his father which occurred early, Chaitanya set himself up as a teacher of the Sanskrit language. The fame of his learning spread far and wide. Students from different parts of the country were attracted to this centre of learning and to the renowned Pandit of Nuddea. It was about this time that he set out on a journey through Eastern Bengal, possibly with the desire of visiting the early home of his father. It was in the course of this journey that he had a discussion with a learned Brahmin and proved his superiority over him. Chaitanya was now a Professor of Sanskrit and it was only natural that his reverence for the faith of his fathers should be great. We accordingly find him, soon after his return from East Bengal, setting out on a journey to Gya for the purpose of offering cakes to appease the offended *manes* of his father and other ancestors.

Gentlemen, we are now approaching a critical period in the life of Chaitanya. We are approaching that period which was to witness a mighty revolution in him, when the meek and humble teacher of Sanskrit was to become the pioneer of a new faith, the leader of a great religious movement. It now becomes our duty, at this stage to take

a wide and comprehensive survey of those circumstances which produced Chaitanya. It has been remarked by a writer of consummate genius, I believe by Mr. Herbert Spencer, that a great man is the product of his age, that he is the representation of the energies of the period, the incarnation of its powers. This remark receives a striking exemplification in the life of Chaitanya, for never was any great man more truly a product of his age, the incarnation of the energies of the times in which he lived, than Chaitanya. And I hope, with the aid of the remarks I am about to submit for your consideration, to place this proposition beyond the shadow of any doubt or controversy.

The Mahomedan conquest of India is not merely to be regarded in the light of a great political event. It produced a profound influence on the religious thought of the country. That empire which had affected to despise the Mlechhas, which had clothed the Brahmins with an almost divine sanctity, had been shattered to pieces, and that by the arm of the Mlechhas. It was painfully clear that there was no real difference between Hindoos and Mussalmans, and that if indeed there was any difference, the difference was clearly in favour of the Mussalmans. A fact of such deep significance was sure to produce a profound impression on the mind of the thoughtful Hindoo; and accordingly we find in the writings of Ramanand, the great religious teacher who rose up soon after the Mahomedan conquest, the remarkable doctrine for the first time enunciated that all worshippers were equal in the eyes of God. But it was impossible that while this mighty tidal wave of religious thought should be surging on the banks of the Ganges, the Punjab lying on the outskirts of Hindooism and in close contiguity to those countries which were the home of Islamism, should not be powerfully influenced by the new faith. And we find in the same century, which produced

Ramanand, Goraknath in the Punjab extolling the worship of Siva and proclaiming the equalizing influence of penances performed by men of whatever caste. But the time was fast approaching when there was to appear on the scene one greater than Ramanand and greater than Goraknath. I refer to the mystic weaver, Kabir Pant. Kabir Pant was a bold and daring reformer. His mind was cast in a very different mould from that of his predecessors. He boldly aspired to restore the faith of his fathers to its pristine purity.* He appealed to Hindoos and Mussalmans and sought to obtain converts from among the professors of both the creeds. And so powerful and abiding has been the influence of his teachings that even at the present day, Kabir-Pantis abound in several parts of the country.

Gentlemen, I set out with the remark that this was an age of religious ferment. And it would have been truly remarkable if Nuddea had escaped from influences which were so universally in operation throughout the rest of India. Nuddea had not long ago been the capital of Bengal. It was even then one of the foremost centres of learning; it had been the birth place of Raghunandan, the great Jurisconsult, of Raghunath Siromoni, the great Logician of Bengal. I say it was impossible that Nuddea should escape from influences so general and so widespread. But the type of religious thought which had obtained predominance in Nuddea was very different from that in the other parts of India. In other parts of the country, noble and enlightened reformers and philanthropists rose up to restore the faith of India to its ancient purity. In Nuddea, the worship of Sakti, accompanied by the Bacchanalian orgies of the Tantric mantras had obtained possession of men's minds. Gentlemen, I wish to speak of all religions with respect. I wish to be tender and charitable towards the conscientious convictions of humanity. But I confess, I can scarcely

repress the feelings of indignation that rise up within me, when I come to speak of a system of faith and a system of ceremonies which, in the name of everything that is great, noble and sublime in human nature, promulgates doctrines so utterly subversive of all the principles of duty and morality. I confess, I can scarcely repress the feelings of indignation that rise up within me when I come to speak of the Sakta faith and the Tantric ceremonies. The worship of Sakti in itself contains nothing hateful, nothing degrading to human nature. The worship of Sakti is merely the worship of the energy of the Creative Power, as manifested in Siva. But it was the Bacchanalian orgies with which such worship was accompanied, that brought disgrace on the name of religion itself. It is consoling to think however that human nature can always rise above the influence of the worst of religions. There is a divinity in human nature which amidst our most precipitate flights downwards ever arrests us with the warning voice—"Thus far shalt thou go and no further." The majesty of human nature will always vindicate for itself the position which rightly belongs to it. Human nature will allow itself to be tainted, to be polluted, to be infected, but its divine image can never be effaced, can never be blotted out.

Vaishnavism rose up as a protest against the abominations of Sakta worship. Darkness, deep and impenetrable, had settled upon the moral atmosphere of Nuddea. The midnight of despair seemed to hover round it. Was there no hope for the people of Nuddea? Must unborn generations be ever drawn into the eddying circles of the Tantric worship? This was the question, solemn and serious, which pressed itself upon the attention of the Vaishnava leaders. They may have erred. They may have blundered. But who will not sympathise with them in their efforts to effect the moral regeneration of their country? Gentlemen, pronounce

your benedictions upon the heads of these apostles of Vaishnavism. May their shades rest in peace! They were ascetics. But who is to blame? Who would not be ascetics in their position? They saw what degrading depths men were led into by the unrestrained indulgence of the senses. The senses, they concluded, were the enemies of man, they were the oppressors of human nature. Sensual pleasures must be interdicted. The senses must be regulated. The senses must be subdued. The senses must be suppressed. They were landed upon the doubtful region of asceticism.

Vaishnavism received a new life and a new soul when Chaitanya appeared on the scene. Chaitanya, no doubt, came under the general influences then universally in operation throughout India, and also under the particular influences which were confined to his own province. But there was another influence of a domestic nature which must have made a deep impression on the sensitive mind of Chaitanya. His own brother Vishwarupa had embraced the life of a Vaishnava ascetic. Here we are furnished with a striking illustration of the powerful influence of domestic example.

Chaitanya, the product of his age, the product of those influences at work in India, in Nuddea, and within the circle of his own family, was now a reformer. The Bhagabatgita was his Gospel. The Bhagabatgita is in many respects a most remarkable work. For perspicuity of language, for melody of versification, and for reach of thought, there is no work in the language equal to it. The book opens with a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. Arjuna, finding himself in the presence of the assembled host of his kinsmen of the Kaurava tribe, is unwilling to engage with them in a mortal conflict. He is unwilling to wade through slaughter to a throne. Krishna reminds him that he is a Kshatrya and extols the duties of caste above those of friendship and

affection. But the portion of the Bhagabatgita which for us possesses the deepest interest is that which refers to the deification of Krishna, for it was precisely this principle which was to receive a powerful impulse at the hands of Chaitanya.

Chaitanya was now a reformer. The Bhagabat was his Gospel. For the first year of his apostolic career, he confined his teachings to his native town. He held nocturnal meetings at the house of Sreebasa. The nocturnal meetings suggest to us the difficulties of his situation. Possibly his first experiences were bitter. Possibly he had to tread the thorny path of most religious reformers. But his enthusiasm and the fervour of his piety overcame all obstacles, and in the second year of his ministration, we find him launching upon a bolder career of apostolic duty. He now takes to street-preaching accompanied by the *Sankirtan*. Gentlemen, we are approaching a period which was to be marked by another great change in the life of Chaitanya. He had now reached the 24th year of his age. The world and its pleasures were before him. He flung them away. He became an ascetic. And now, just contemplate the nobleness of this act of self-sacrifice. Chaitanya was devotedly attached to his mother. He loved her with all that fondness and enthusiasm which a Hindoo son alone is capable of feeling. Yet on the altar of duty he rent in twain the bond of sympathy and affection which knit him to his revered parent. But there was no help for it. Sachi Devi may weep. Sachi Devi's heart may bleed. As the day dawns, as the sun sets, she may send forth dolorous cries of maternal bereavement before the Great Dispenser of all woes. But a great act of public duty had to be performed. A living protest against the abominations of the Tantric worship was necessary. Who was to make that protest? Who was to offer himself up as a sacrifice? Chaitanya did it in his own person. He became an ascetic.

He shortly after sets out on a journey to Gour. The village of Ram Kali, not far off from Gour, becomes the scene of a remarkable incident. Chaitanya was asked to preach. He obeyed the summons. A crowd gathered round him. In that crowd there were two men of an enthusiastic and impressionable turn of mind. Fascinated by the charms of his eloquence and the cogency of his reasoning, they declared their willingness to embrace Vaishnavism. Chaitanya admitted them within the pale of that faith of which he was the chosen apostle. These converts were Mahomedans. They figure in Vaishnava history under the names of Rupa and Sanatana. And here, gentlemen, I would ask you to consider the terrible risk which Chaitanya incurred in converting these Mahomedans to the new faith. The rulers of Bengal were Mahomedans; and by the law of the land, he who induced a Mahomedan to give up the faith of Islam was liable to the sentence of death. But Chaitanya was not to be dismayed by the mere prospect of death. On the altar of duty he had sacrificed the tenderest feelings of the human heart, the reverence for a mother, the love for a wife. And was he to be dissuaded from the discharge of what he believed to be a solemn duty, because he might thereby incur the risk of death? Countrymen of Chaitanya, contemplate this sublime spectacle, this firm and unyielding adherence to the cause of duty, and try to imitate it.

From Gour Chaitanya proceeds to Santipur, where he had an affecting interview with his mother. From Santipur he sets out for Pooree. On his way he meets Sarbabhauma. Bhattacharjea whom he converts to his faith. Sarbabhauma afterwards became one of the most illustrious of his disciples. I mention the conversion of Sarbabhauma Bhattacharjea, because on that occasion and in the course of the arguments he addressed to that learned Pundit, Chaitanya enunciated a very remarkable doctrine. He is said to have argued that

earthly knowledge without the light of faith is not sufficient to give us an insight into things divine. Gentlemen, I am not here permitted to consider this doctrine from a religious point of view, but I may stop to point out its deep significance from a social and a political point of view.

A man of faith, of deep convictions, is a great social power. A man with a conviction, says Mill, in his essay on *Representative Government*, is a social power equal to ninety-nine without one. I venture to lay down this broad, this general proposition, that if a man wishes to do anything great or good to mankind, he must have deep, earnest, and heart-felt convictions with regard to the great questions that affect the welfare of humanity. What was it that at the diet of worms made the illustrious monk of Wurtenbourg so great a power, a power even greater than the Emperor Charles V. It was that Martin Luther had a deep and heart-felt belief with regard to a most important question that was then convulsing the whole of Europe. How was it, again, that Daniel O'Connel, the great Irish Liberator, was able to extort the Catholic Emancipation Bill from the English Government and the English Parliament? He had a strong conviction that the measure was good for his countrymen. He persuaded his countrymen to the same belief. He arranged the social forces, on behalf of that belief, and the English Government of that day, headed by the most obstinate of men, the late Duke of Wellington, had to yield. Therefore, Indian patriots would do well to bear in mind this important truth, that if they wish to effect any measure of reform, what they have got to do is to influence public opinion and to arrange the social forces in favour of the measure they advocate, and when once they have enlisted the social forces on their behalf, they may rest assured that no Government in the world would be strong enough to resist the weight of the social forces or the omnipotent voice of public opinion.

Chaitanya was now at Pooree or Nilachala, and from there he set out on a journey through Southern India, in the course of which he visited Rameswar, lying at the extreme south of the Indian Peninsula. A Hindoo of modern days, after having undertaken a sea-voyage perhaps as far as Galle on board the first class cabin of a P. & O. Company's steamer, fancies that he has performed a great feat, and begins to think no end of himself. But Chaitanya's journey through Southern India was no trip of amusement. Friendless, helpless, moneyless, his path lay across tracts of country without a road and infested by wild beasts and by men perhaps wilder than beasts. Nothing daunted, he proceeded on his journey, singing the name of Hari, and obtaining converts by hundreds. Sought by kings, he refused to have any thing to do with them. Would that his countrymen of the present day learn a lesson from Chaitanya in this respect, and not think so much of gubernatorial favours or acts of condescension!

His return to Nilachala was marked by enthusiastic demonstrations of joy, on the part of his disciples. But his restless spirit, ever eager for work, would not long permit him the enjoyment of repose. Soon after his return from Southern India, he sets out for Mathura. At Mathura he obtains many Pathan converts. On his way back to Nilachala, he meets his disciple Rupa at Allahabad. In the meantime Sanatan had passed through a severe trial. He had been deprived of his office and suffered incarceration in consequence of his faith, and was only able to effect his release by bribing the jailor.

Chaitanya had now reached the 30th year of his age. The remaining years of his life were passed at Nilachala. He busied himself, during this period, chiefly in expounding the tenets of the Bhagabat, in exhorting his followers, in strengthening their faith, and in receiving visits from eminent Vaishnavas.

As years advanced Chaitanya shewed unmistakeable signs of mental aberration. For my part, gentlemen, I would here willingly throw the veil of oblivion over the concluding scenes of the life of this great man. No spectacle is so painful and so heart-rending, none touches the chords of human sympathy so much, as the spectacle of the wreck of a great soul. Who would not willingly throw the veil over the concluding scenes of the life of Edmund Burke? Who would not willingly throw the veil over the concluding scenes of the life of Robert Southey? Who would not willingly throw the veil over the concluding scenes of the life of the immortal founder of Positive Philosophy? And what Hindoo is there I ask, who would not be spared the harrowing details of the closing events in the life of the great apostle of Vaishnavism? I frankly confess, that so far as I am concerned my regard for Chaitanya is so great, my veneration is so profound, that I shall only content myself by bringing to your notice the event which caused Chaitanya's death.

One night Chaitanya was out for his usual walk in the evening, accompanied by some of his followers. The moon was shining brightly over head. External nature never presented a more beauteous aspect. Chaitanya's excited imagination led him to think that the Chilka lake was the river Jumna, on the waters of which his own favourite deity Krishna was sporting. He rushed forward to embrace the image of his beloved God, and was drowned in the lake. Some fishermen who were fishing close by, found his body in their net on the following morning. The adulation of his followers has invested the closing scene in the life of Chaitanya with incidents of a marvellous nature. He is said to have revived at the sound of the *Haribol,* and to have afterwards mysteriously disappeared from his followers.

Thus died Chaitanya in the 43rd year of his age. My sketch of his life has necessarily been brief and imperfect. I have

only been able to bring to your notice, in the most general way, the salient features connected with his life and his doctrines. The life of Chaitanya like the life of many other great men, has suffered from a two-fold cause. The adulation of his followers has led them to interweave the story of his life with many marvellous incidents. The real greatness of his character has thus come to be enshrouded in a mist of fables. But this is not the only circumstance from which the life of Chaitanya has suffered. The Vaishnavas of the present day are distinguished by their lewdness and their sensuality. The Vaishnavas are the disciples of Chaitanya. They are nursed in his doctrines, fed with that spiritual food which he has left for them. And is he not responsible for their misdeeds ? Is not this a dark spot which may be said to dim the lustre of his fame. Let us, gentlemen, approach the consideration of this question with some care and circumspection. Let it be remembered, in the first place, that Chaitanya's was a life of unsullied purity. Calumny itself has never breathed the faintest suspicion against the stainless purity of his character. Nor was it merely that his own life was above all suspicion and above all taint. Those who were brought into immediate personal relations with him, and came under the immediate influence of his genius and of his exalted character, were likewise remarkable for their unsullied purity and rectitude of conduct. Witness, for instance, the example of Hari Dass. Hari Dass was one of the most renowned of Chaitanya's disciples. It is said that on one occasion he had retired to the forest, to carry on his devotions. The fame of his austerities spread far and wide. People flocked to have a sight of the Vaishnava ascetic engaged in his prayers. The jealousy of the Mahomedan Governor was roused. He resolved to bring these severe forms of worship to an end. He set upon a scheme truly oriental in its character. He sent a harlot to Hari Dass.

The harlot appears before Hari Dass, dressed in all the pomp of prubish finery; she presents a petition to the ascetic. She was told to wait till Hari Dass had done with his devotions. Day passed, night passed. Hari Dass was still at his devotions. The petition was renewed. The same answer was given. Day passed, night passed. And Hari Dass was still at his devotions. Foiled in her attempt and struck by the austerity of the devotions which she was powerless to interrupt, she herself becomes a convert to the Vaishnava faith. Thus was Chaitanya, thus were those who came under the influence of his genius, distinguished by the purity of their character. Is then Chaitanya responsible for the sensuality and immorality of the modern Vaishnavas? Let us take an analogous case. We all know the spotless purity which marked the career of the immortal founder of Christianity. We all know how pure were the lives of his immediate disciples; and we happen to know something of his modern disciples. I ask, is Christ responsible for the wars which devastated Europe during the middle ages? Is Christ responsible for the inquisitorial proceedings of Philip II. and the Duke of Alva? And finally I ask, is Christ responsible for the doings of a Kirkwood, of a Fuller, of a Webster or of a D'oyley? If then the iniquities of the modern professors of Christianity cannot in any sense be chargeable to Christ, how can Chaitanya be held responsible for the lewdness and immorality of the modern Vaishnavas?

In presenting the lofty ideal of Chaitanya's life to this meeting, I have had only one object in view. I was most anxious to point out to my young friends, whom I see around me in such large numbers, the great power which an earnest man must always wield. Chaitanya preached doctrines which could not in every case have recommended themselves to the willing and spontaneous assent of his countrymen. He waged war against caste. He endeavoured to pull down one

of those institutions which had struck the deepest root in the minds and convictions of his countrymen and which had withstood the fanaticism of successive Mussalman sovereigns. Yet, he was honoured and respected in his lifetime and he was adored as a prophet after his death. In his presence and in the burning words that he uttered, men felt the irresistible power of earnestness and of deep convictions based upon immutable truth. Hence was it that he was invincible, and Hindoos and Mussalmans alike adopted with implicit faith the teachings of the great apostle of Vaishnavism. Chaitanya preached against caste. He sought thus to unite Hindoos and Mussalmans under the banner of a common religion. Union was his watchword, and should not Union be the watchword of the age in which we live? The great struggle, the constitutional struggle for our rights and privileges has commenced. In that struggle union alone can ensure success. The cry has gone forth that all India must unite, forgetful of past animosities and jealousies, in order to fight in a constitutional manner, the great battle for those rights and privileges which Parliament has conferred upon us and which our gracious Sovereign has been pleased to ratify with the seal of her sanction. Sitting at the feet of Chaitanya let us then learn to be earnest in all things that we do, earnest in our studies, earnest in fighting the battle of our life, earnest above all in the great struggle in which every one must take part,—the struggle which must end in the achievement of self-government for the people of this country.

ENGLAND AND INDIA.

The following address on England and India was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea at the Anniversary Meeting of the Bhowanipore Student's Association, held on the 28th April 1877 in the Hall of the London Missionary Society's Institution, Bhowanipore, Calcutta. The Right Reverend E. R. Johnson D. D. Lord Bishop of Calcutta, was in the Chair.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

When sometime ago, your Secretary, whose youthful zeal and enthusiasm I greatly admire, requested me to deliver an address at the anniversary meeting of this Association, I felt that it was a call to duty, which I ought cheerfully to respond to. The observance of the anniversaries of the birth of men has been a cherished institution with humanity. Its origin is lost in the dim haze of remote antiquity. Traces of this institution are to be met with in our own ancient books and in the early records of Semitic literature. The institution itself is founded upon a fact of human nature—upon a fundamental principle of the human mind. The principle of self-love—the principle of self-glorification—is deeply implanted in the heart of man, and furnishes the most powerful incentive to human action. There may, no doubt, be disinterested patriots who, forgetting self, may live and die for the benefit of a hapless country. There may, no doubt, be genuine philanthropists, who may consider it a

privilege to offer up their lives for the furtherance of human progress. But such men are few, and as far as the vast majority of mankind are concerned, the principle of self-love, the principle of self-glorification, may be said to form the regulating motive of human conduct. It is, therefore, but natural that we should feel an instinctive desire to observe as festive the day when for the first time we saw the light. But our ideas, our conceptions, and our associations are progressing with the ever-widening circle of our experiences. The rude, untutored man, living within the narrow circle of his own individuality, had learnt to observe the anniversary of his own birth. But the highly-civilized being of the 19th century, living in a higher atmosphere of thought and feeling, and capable of associating others with himself, has learnt a wider application of the rude conception of the savage, and observes as festive the anniversaries of public associations and institutions—those distinctive features of modern civilization.

And it is as well that there should be these public meetings, for these are the only occasions when the public have an opportunity of knowing the work of these associations, how far they have been successful, and in what respects they have failed. These are the only occasions when the light of public opinion could find its way into the dim recesses of these corporate bodies. Nor is this all. To the thoughtful observer of Indian affairs, these associations, their public meetings, and their anniversaries, are fraught with the deepest possible interest. They seem to indicate the first beginnings of a new national life—the first faint, feeble tremor of a pulse which had ceased to beat for centuries. Gentlemen, when I cast my eyes around this great metropolis, observe the number of associations which have of late sprung forth into life, the zeal and enthusiasm which support them, the sympathy they have evoked, the public spirit they have

created; when I further reflect on the fact, that it is young men who are the moving spirits of these associations, I begin to think that my country is not dead—she lives—she is not a thing of the past—a relic of bye-gone times, but a living organism of the present.

The student of history, as he surveys the incidents of the past, has his attention drawn to some facts of towering and gigantic significance. The Asiatic invasion of Alexander, bringing the East and the West for the first time into close and intimate contact, imbuing the Western mind with the ideas of Eastern civilization; the spread of Roman power throughout Europe, carrying in its train the great blessings of peace and civilization; the rise of Christianity, announcing, in language never to be forgotten, the divine lessons of meekness, of forgiveness, of charity; the march of the triumphant soldiers of the Crescent through Europe, bearing in their hand the faded torch of learning and civilization; the discovery of America and the train of marvellous events which led to the establishment of the mightiest Republic in the world; the French Revolution—declaring amid blood and smoke the great lessons of political freedom, warning tyrants not to trespass too far on the patience of their subjects;—I say, these are facts of towering importance in the history of humanity which rivet the attention of the thoughtful student. But yet there is another fact of very great importance—a fact of stupendous significance—which I have not yet mentioned, but which deserves to be mentioned in this connection—I refer to the establishment of British supremacy in India.

I do not, gentlemen, propose carrying you through the blood-stained events which led to that great consummation, but I verily believe that the establishment of British power in India was Providential. I verily believe that some such connection was needed at the time for the salvation of

India. Aryan civilization had spent its force. The Mahomedan power was in its last gasp. Anarchy, confusion, chaos, reigned supreme over the land. Darkness had settled upon men's countenances. The midnight of despair seemed to hover around. Was there no hope for India? Was there nothing written in the book of fate for the deliverance of my fatherland? Was there no hand on high to shield and protect her? India sat bathed in tears before her God. Aye, India sat bathed in tears—she, the cradle of Eastern civilization, she who had nursed in her lap Valmiki and Vyasa, Gautama and Sankaracharjya—who had sent forth the great Budhistic missionaries on their errand of duty and philanthrophy;—aye, she sat bathed in tears, sending forth dolorous cries of lamentation before the great Dispenser of woes, blood gushing forth from her sides, her shield of protection gone.

But it was not long before the heavenly response came. Britain appeared as the ministering angel, bearing messages of peace and joy, the glad-tidings of progress and civilization. I ask, then, has England a mission in this country, or has she not? If it is said that she has no mission in India, I ask what right has she to be here? I ask how does she appease her conscience, or justify her domination over a foreign country? If it is once admitted that she has no mission here, we are driven to the conclusion that the English Empire in India rests not upon the principles of justice and truth, or upon the willing allegiance of a subject people, but upon pure, simple, unmitigated brute force. England then has a mission, and a glorious mission,—a mission indeed more glorious, more responsible than was even that of Rome; for England appears before us as a Christian country, and the inheritor of the illustrious traditions of modern civilization.

What then is England's mission in India? Her mission may be said to be comprised under the three following heads:—

(1) To help towards the eradication of those evils which afflict Indian society.

(2) To help in the formation of a manly, energetic, self-reliant Indian character.

(3) To introduce the art of self-government in India.

Roughly speaking, the mission of England may be comprised within the aforesaid limits.

Are there then any evils which afflict Hindu society, any foul blots in connection with our social system ? I know there are people who call themselves "Nationalists"—I would call them "Denationalists," for they are people who would suck the life-blood out of the nation and destroy everything that is great and manly in it—who would have us believe that our social atmosphere is holy, pure, untainted by sin or corruption, and that, therefore, it becomes our duty to preserve the institutions of our fathers and to guard them against the ingress of modern thought and civilization. Gentlemen, I yield to none in my respect for the name of Arya. I yield to none in my respect for the time-honoured institutions of my country. But I should be false to myself, false to my countrymen, false to the traditions of the Aryan race, if I would conceal from myself the conviction that there are foul blots connected with our social system which must be cleansed and wiped out, before the political regeneration of India can be possible. If you say there are no foul blots connected with our social system, I point to the institution of caste, the institution of child-marriage, the zenana-system, the custom prohibiting the re-marriage of widow. I would lay my hand on these customs, and I would ask my Nationalist friends to say whether these are not customs which are pernicious in their character and are eating into the very vitals of the nation ?

Now, with reference to the institution of caste, it is my pleasing duty to be able to say that the educated sentiment of the country has been marshalled against it, and that it

is a custom which finds favour now-a-days only with women and ignorant men. That being the case, we may hope for its extinction at no remote distance of time. For by a process of filtration with which you are all familiar, the sentiment of the educated classes becomes in the course of time the sentiment of the entire people. The institution of caste, is then doomed. The decree of fate has been pronounced against it. And the day is not distant when the great doctrine of the brotherhood of the Indian races will be proclaimed from one end of the country to the other, from the Himalaya Mountains to Cape Comorin, and from the Bay of Bengal to the Indian Ocean.

The same remarks apply, though in a modified degree, to the institution of child-marriage, and the custom prohibiting the re-marriage of widows.

I pass on, gentlemen, to the consideration of the zenana-system. The institution is of alien origin. It is to be traced to the Mahomedan rulers of India. It may have been a mere imitation of a Mahomedan custom, or it may have been forced upon our fathers by the unrestrained license of Mahomedan manners. But whatever may have been the case, the custom itself has struck deep root into our national life, and at the present moment I know of no social usage among us which possesses so much life, so much strength and so much energy as the institution of the zenana. When I say, this pernicious institution possesses so much vitality and energy, do I mean to cast any aspersion upon my countrymen ? Do I mean to pursue them with ridicule and scorn ? No, gentlemen, I respect the feelings which have dictated their obstinate perseverance in this custom. The zenana is a Hindu custom, because Hindus are so anxious to guard with care the honour of their women. The custom itself is to be reprobated ; but the feeling on which it is founded must be respected.

Gentlemen, is it necessary, I ask, that I should pause here to point out the pernicious consequences of this custom ? I ask how is it possible for our women to take any kind of exercise within the confined recesses of the zenana, and how can they be expected to preserve their health without exercise ? How, again, I ask, can you possibly hope to educate them properly, when you deprive them of one of the most powerful and one of the most efficacious instruments of education—social intercourse ? If you ask an English lady, to what it is that she is most indebted for her education, she will tell you, that it is not to her books, not to the lectures of her teachers and professors, but to that healthy interchange of thoughts and ideas which forms the peculiar feature of English social life. Thus, our women grow up within the zenana without any adequate mental or bodily culture, and they become the mothers of our children. The absence of any culture on the part of our women, and their defective *physique* have thus a profound influence on the fortunes of our race. Let no body, after this, seek for the causes of our degradation.

Gentlemen, you are Aryans, you boast of the past of your country. You boast of the illustrious traditions of your race. I too sympathize with that feeling ; I too am proud of the past glories of my country. But I ask, where do you find in the past a custom which bears the faintest resemblance to the zenana ? Were your Sita and your Sabitri, your Khana and your Ahalya, women of the zenana ? I do not desire, gentlemen, that you should go back from this meeting and breaking down the prison walls of the zenana, should at once lead your women forth into the light of day. I am not in favour of such hasty reformation. A period of re-action would follow, in which the evil would more than counterbalance the good that had been produced. What I desire is, that the sentiment of my educated countrymen

should be arrayed against this pernicious custom. I would beg of you, therefore, I would pray and beseech you in the name of your mothers, sisters, daughters, wives in the name of the fairest and gentlest of human kind to reflect and think upon this grave question, and if, after due consideration, you are happily of opinion that this custom should be done away with, then I say, root this evil out of the land, purge, cleanse, purify the country of this great and gigantic monster.

Here, then, are the great evils which afflict Hindu society. Here then are the pernicious customs which are sucking up the lifeblood of the nation, and I ask how far has England fulfilled her mission in impairing their vitality? England, it must be remembered, is a Christian country, professing and acting upon the principles of tolerance and religious neutrality. Our social institutions are again bound up with our religious beliefs, and a tolerant Government could scarcely be expected to interfere with them, however pernicious in their character they might be. No doubt, there have been occasions when England has laid aside such scruples, and has boldly come forward in the name of suffering humanity to suppress outrageous and atrocious customs. We all know how England put down the institution of *suttee*, how she put down infanticide. But a line of policy adopted on an occasion of supreme emergency cannot be expected, nor indeed ought it, to regulate the every-day conduct of the British Government. Has the influence of England, then, been in no way felt in the efforts which have been made to impair the vitality of those pernicious customs which afflict Hindu society? Her influence has been felt. English civilization has been introduced in the train of English conquest, and that civilization is essentially revolutionary in its character. To what would you in some measure at least ascribe the French Revolution? Was it not due to

the powerful junction between the intellect of France and the intellect of England, which preceded that great event? Were not the great leaders of the French Revolution, Voltaire and Rousseau, Diderot, and Helvetius—men more or less imbued with English ideas and sentiments? England has introduced a revolutionary agent of might potency into this country. That revolutionary agent is English education. If, amid the revolution which are taking place around us, the connection which now subsists between England and India were to cease (may God avert that day of our calamity!)—I say, if this connection were to cease, what is it that would endear the name of England to the people of this country, what is it that would awaken grateful reminiscences in the mind of posterity, regarding this connection? Would it be the statues with which the *maidan* is strewed, would it be the palatial buildings that have been constructed, the architectural works of public utility that have been erected,—Soane Bridge, the Jumna Bridge, the Ganges Canal—would it be the railways or the telegraphs, or would it be even that beneficent and generous policy which dictated the abolition of *suttee* and of infanticide? Aye, no; it would rather be the conviction that under the auspices of British rule were, for the first time, sown the seeds of of a permanent, lasting and durable civilization, heralded by the genius of British literature.

But gentlemen, is England merely to confine herself to indirect efforts? Is she merely to trust to the spread of English education for the amelioration of the evils which afflict Hindu society, and for the improvement of our social customs and institutions. Is there not a better and a more effective way of accomplishing the same end? There certainly is, and if it is not availed of, the fault is not ours. I say, then, that Englishmen can exercise a most potent influence upon our manners and customs, by introducing us

into their social circles, and by mixing with us on terms of equality and intimacy. Nature interposes no obstacles, no barriers to such intercourse between the two races. Why,—in England an Indian is treated with a kindness, a courtesy, a geniality and affability which cannot be forgotten.* I can bear my personal testimony to this fact. There, at all events, there is no distinction between a dominant and a subject race. Go to a bank to transact business, your colour is respected. Go to the lecture-room

* I cannot refrain from quoting in this place the very pertinent remarks of Mr. Bright upon this subject. "When natives of India," says the great authority, "come to this country, they are delighted with England and with Englishmen. They find themselves treated with a kindness, a consideration, a respect, to which they were wholly strangers in their own country; and they cannot understand how it is that men who are so just, so attentive to them here, sometimes, indeed too often, appear to them in a different character in India. I remember that the Hon. Frederic Shore, who wrote some thirty years since, stated, in his able and instructive book, that even in his time the conduct of the English in India towards the Natives was less agreeable, less kindly, less just than it had been on former years; and in 1853, before the Committee presided over by the Hon. Member for Huntingdon, (Mr. T. Barring), evidence was given that the feeling between the rulers and the ruled in India was becoming every year less like what could be desired. It was only the other day there appeared in a letter of the '*The times*' Correspondent an anecdote which illustrates what I am saying, and which I feel it necessary to read to the House. Mr. Russell, of *The Times*, says;—

"I went off to breakfast in a small mosque, which has been turned into a *salle à manger* by some officers stationed here, and I confess I should have eaten with more satisfaction had I not seen, as I entered the enclosure of the mosque a native badly wounded on a charpoy, by which was sitting a woman in deep affliction. The explanation given of this scene was that,"—[the name of the Englishman was left blank] had been kicking two of his *bearers* (servants) and had nearly murdered them. This was one of the servants, and without knowing or caring to know the causes of such chastisement, I cannot but express my disgust at the severity—to call it by no harsher name—of some of our fellow countrymen towards their domestics. (Bright's Speeches, Popular Edition p. 101).

for instruction, your professor is kind and affable, and is most anxious to explain your difficulties. Go to a *soiree*, you are the centre of attraction. Englishmen laying aside their habitual reserve would come and talk to you in a frank and hearty manner, would perhaps ask you to tea or dinner, and introduce their families to you. But it will perhaps be said that in India we are a subject people ; the English are the dominant race. We cannot, therefore, be admitted into their social circles on a footing of equality. But, gentlemen, is not this a Christian country ? Are not our rulers, Christian country ? Are not our rulers Christian men ? Do they not believe in the teachings of the New Testament ? And is it not written there in characters of blood,—aye in the blood of martyrs and saints,—that all men are equal ? Deprive Christianity of this doctrine of equality, and it is no longer Christianity ; it is mutilated Christianity ; it is Christianity without Christ, Christianity without Paul, Christianity without Peter. Let Engishmen then admit us into their social circles on a footing of equality, and they will exercise a powerful influence on our manners and customs, and help England in the accomplishment of her great mission in the East.

I now pass on to the consideration of the next point in the argument, *viz.*, that it is England's duty to help in the formation of a manly, self-reliant, and energetic Indian character. I know there are some who think that we are as unmanly, as unenergetic, as devoid of self-reliance as we ever were, in any period of our history. Not long ago, I was reading a minute by Sir Henry Davis, late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, a minute of great importance, in which that distinguished officer signs the death warrant of the Delhi College. In that Minute, Sir Henry has been kind enough to state his reasons for the abolition of the Delhi College. One of those reasons is, that as English

education has not been able to develop a manly character among the Indian people, the benefits of English education were not so apparent. Sir Henry seems to have been strangely insensible to the fact that it takes rather a long time to effect a very marked or fundamental improvement in the national character of a people. But if it were admitted that under British rule there has been no improvement in the national character of a people. But if it were admitted that under British rule there has been no improvement in the national character, would not that imply a serious reflection upon the character of the English administration in India? My contention is, that the character of the people of this country for energy and self-reliance has improved, and has greatly improved, under the auspices of British civilization. I would point to the numerous national institutions which have been established within recent years, institutions which originated with Indians and are worked by Indians. I would point to Dr. Sircar's Science Association; to the Political Associations which have lately been established; to the commercial firms started and conducted by native Indians, and to that remarkable fact which has not been sufficiently noticed, but which deserves to be prominently noticed, that an Indian gentleman is in charge of one of the Railway lines in this city, and that what was before a losing concern, has now, under his management, become a profitable concern. All this I say is due to English influences, not the least of which is the influence of English literature.

I now pass on, gentlemen, with your permission, to the consideration of the last head of England's duty towards India:—Has England fulfilled her mission in teaching us the great lesson of self-government? And here the scene is completely changed. The curtain must now fall upon that spectacle of inaffable beauty which up to this time had rivetted our attention—the spectacle of a great country struggling to fulfil its

sacred trust. It will now be my duty to draw a picture different from the one I had been endeavouring to describe, and here the shades of black must predominate over the colours of light.

I ask the question, do we govern ourselves, or do we not? I am afraid the question must be answered in the negative. We are excluded from the higher offices of trust and responsibility under the Government. The appointments in the Civil Service are, for the most part, held by Englishmen. We are excluded from the commissioned ranks in the army. Our voice has no weight in the deliberations of Government. There are no doubt nominees of Government to represent us in the Legislative and Supreme Councils; but for all practical purposes they might not be as well there. They are in a hopeless minority, and in every case the resolutions of Government must necessarily be carried.

Gentlemen, it is painful to contrast the policy of our present rulers in this respect, with the policy of the late Mahomedan government and the policy of the Romans in the government of their dependencies. I do not mean to institute any comparison between Mahomedan and English rule in India. Such a comparison would be ridiculous, and would be a mere affectation. It would be a comparison between two terms which are wholly dissimilar in their nature. It would be a comparison between a highly civilized Government and a Government which had scarcely emerged from barbarism. But I must do our Mahomedan rulers the justice to say that they made no distinction between the conquerors and the conquered, between the subject and the dominant race in the conferring of offices of trust and responsibility. Under the Mahomedan Government, there was not an office to which Hindus might not have been appointed. They were governors of provinces, commanders of armies, confidential advisers of the sovereign.

The policy of Rome, in its Government of subject provinces, was marked by a similar spirit of liberality and beneficence. And if we are to believe the great historian Gibbon, the descendants of the Gauls who had resisted the triumphant march of the legions of Cæsar, became Roman Senators and the commanders of Roman armies. But it will be said that we are not fit for self-government. I ask, has the experiment been ever fairly tried ? And so far as the experiment has been tried has it not, on the whole, been successful ? The principle of self-government has been recognized in the administration of Bombay : and the system has been remarkably successful. The same system has been introduced here, and though perhaps it is too early to augur the success of the Calcutta Municipality, the system may be said to be working very well here. Then, in by far the greater number of those offices of trust and responsibility to which native gentlemen have been appointed, they have done their duties in a manner highly creditable to themselves. Therefore, I say, the experiment of self-government has, on the whole, been successful in this country.

But those who urge that we are wholly unfit for self-government are driven to a position that is not possible to retain. We are unfit for self-government. But the Burmese are fit for self-government ; the Siamese are fit for self-government ; the Chinese are fit for self-government ; the Japanese are fit for self-government. These semibarbarous nations, who are governing themselves, are all fit for self-government, but not the subjects of Her Imperial Majesty ; not the subjects of the Christian Queen of England, our beloved Sovereign ; (not the subjects of the most civilized nation in the world ; *they* are not fit for self-government after a century of British rule ! I ask, how does this position redound to the credit of England ? If an Englishmen were to tell me—"Your people are not fit for self-government," I would give him this answer—"Sir, we have been under your pupilage, your

guardianship, your care, for the period of nearly a century, very much in the same way as the child is under the protection of his father : and if, after a century of British rule, we have not improved, if we are not fit for self-government, *you* are to blame rather than ourselves, in the same way as the father is to blame for the faults of the child."

But, gentlemen, in saying that England can scarcely be said to have fulfilled her mission in associating natives of India in the government of this country, I must do the Indian Government the justice to remark that that Government is most anxious to remove this source of complaint, and I understand that at the present moment a scheme is in contemplation, to facilitate the appointment of natives of India to the higher offices under Government. But that does not preclude us from offering our suggestions upon this grave and important question. I should, therefore, suggest that facilities should be given for appointing natives of India to the convenanted ranks of the Civil Service, by holding the open competitive examination in India, where a certain definite proportion of appointments may be competed for, year after year. Secondly, I would submit that every facility should be afforded to natives of India for admission into the commissioned ranks of the army. Lastly, a well-defined scheme of representation should be introduced into India, so as to familiarize the people of this country with those principles which underlie the political system of England. Already these questions are creating a stir in native society, and especially the first. I may say, gentlemen, that the battle for our rights and privileges has already begun, that blood-less battle in which truth decides the contest, that blood-less battle in which victors and vanquished have each reasons to congratulate themselves ; and if we are Indians, if we are Aryans, the victory will be ours. But may not England claim that victory with greater right ?

And it will be the proudest victory in her illustrious annals. England's services to humanity are already very great. It was English money that enfranchised the Negro slaves. It was the loving sympathy and active co-operation of Englishmen and English-women that supported the drooping spirits of the Greek and Italian martyrs, struggling for the independence of their classic countries. But all these great deeds and achievements will dwindle into insignificance, will be cast into the shade, their splendour dimmed, when it shall be proclaimed from the heights of the Himalayas to a gazing and admiring world that under the auspices of British rule, a great and an ancient people have been regenerated, saved, and emancipated, and that the seeds of a great and lasting civilization have been sown in a soil hitherto the scene of unexampled chaos, confusion, and anarchy.

But, gentlemen, it will perhaps be said that England's mission in the East would be best accomplished by the introduction and the spread of Christianity throughout India. I am not a Christian, but I have a great and genuine regard for the Bible. What could be sweeter than the Psalms of David? What could be nobler than the precepts of Jesus? What more refreshing to the drooping spirit of a man struggling against adversity, than the example of the life of the immortal founder of Christianity, spurning the world, spurning its joys and sorrows, living in the greatness of his mission, dying for his mission? But, gentlemen, what is needed for the regeneration of India is not Christian texts, is not Christian addresses, is not Christian sermons, is not Christian lectures. What is needed, is the exhibition of the life of the truly genuine Christian—the exhibition, in actual life, of the meekness, the gentleness, the charity, the forgiveness for which Christ lived and died. If anybody were to ask me what it is that has interfered with the spread of Christianity in this country, I would tell him

that it is the contrast between the teaching of Christ and the exhibition of Christian life in India. I must except the Christian missionaries, a most worthy body of men who have rendered great services to this country. I must except the native converts, some of whom are the brilliant ornaments of Indian society. But there are men in India who call themselves Christians, who profess the tenets of that noble faith, but who lead most unchristian lives, sully the memory of the meek and crucified Jesus, violate his precepts and bring disgrace upon Christianity. It is not a mere profession of Christianity that will regenerate India. If Christianity is to exercise any great influence upon our characters, our manners and customs, and help England in the fulfilment of her great mission in the East, it must be by the exhibition of Christian life, of Christian meekness, gentleness, and forgiveness.

Gentlemen, I have thus brought to a close my brief, hasty and necessarily imperfect sketch of the mission of England in India, and how that mission may be best fulfilled. Great social evils have to be eradicated, the art of self-government has to be introduced into India, and a manly, energetic, self-reliant Indian character has to be developed. England can only help us in the consummation of these great ends. Her mission ends there ; but I ask, have we no mission of our own ? Who is to regenerate and civilize India—Englishmen or ourselves ? Upon our shoulders rests the responsibility of this great undertaking. We have a mission then, and a much more onerous and responsible mission than that of England. Rise then to the solemnity of your mission, the greatness of your obligations. You are the missionaries of a new faith, the pioneers of a new civilization, a faith and a civilization which should seek to promote the welfare of an unhappy Fatherland. Europe is progressing, America is progressing, China is progressing, Japan is progressing, in

the race of national life. And will you lag behind? Japan beckons to you from across the seas to follow her example—Japan which acknowledges the moral ascendancy of India. Not long ago, the Japanese nobles performed an act of self-sacrifice which has scarcely any parallel in the annals of our race. The feudal nobles of Japan in a body went up to their sovereign, and in the name of their God, and for the benefit of their countrymen, they gave up their ancient feudal rights and privileges. It seems as if the spirit of Sakya Muni had been communicated to the Japanese. Follow their example.

Gentlemen, in the struggle in which you are about to be engaged for the regeneration of your country, and the accomplishment of your mission, I can promise you no easy victory. Sorrow and misfortune will be your lot in life. You will be assailed by trials, by dangers, by difficulties of appalling magnitude. The storms of persecution will rage around you. Death may even frown upon you. Friends and relatives will forsake you, and you will stand a solitary trunk in this great wilderness of the world. But will you hesitate? Will you falter? Hesitation, in the presence of so sacred a duty, and when your bleeding country lies prostrate at your feet! Chaitanya, Sakya Muni, and Nanak will be our trusted leaders in this great struggle. Let us sit at their feet, let us hold communion with their spirits. Let us learn from them something of their meekness, something of their charity, something of their self-sacrifice, something of their unbounded love for humanity. Thus prepared and fortified, the victory will be ours.

LORD MACAULAY

AND

HIGH EDUCATION IN INDIA.

The following address on Lord Macaulay and High Education in India was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea at the thirty-fifth Hare Anniversary (in commemoration of David Hare, the "Father of English Education in Bengal)," held on the 1st June 1878 in hall of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Calcutta. Rai Rajendra Lala Mitra Bahadur, L.L.D. C.I.E., was in the Chair.

GENTLEMEN,

I do not think it necessary to offer any apology for occupying the position, that by your courtesy I happen to occupy this evening. But I do confess, I think it a great honour to be allowed the opportunity of addressing an assembly of my educated countrymen, on an occasion like the present, on the occasion of the anniversary of the death of the illustrious David Hare. Gentlemen, there are duties which the heart of man longs to perform. There are obligations which human nature will not allow to remain unsatisfied and unfulfilled. One of those duties, one of those obligations, I conceive to be that yearly tribute of homage and reverence, which we pay to the sacred memory of David Hare. Gentlemen, in the midst of all the perversity and degradation that we see around us, in the midst of all that loathing meanness and baseness against which we

so often feel it our duty to raise our humble voices in solemn protest—I say in the midst of all this perversity, this degradation, this meanness, there is still left in man that noble spark of divine feeling which prompts him to pay his homage at the shrines of departed greatness, and to treasure up, in the depths of his heart, the memories of those great and good men, whose lives have been bright examples for our imitation and guidance, and whose actions have shed imperishable lustre on the history of our race. We may crucify a Jesus Christ, when he holds up for the acceptance of degraded humanity the great principle of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. We may persecute a Joseph Mazzini, exile him, excommunicate him, expel him from the pale of civilized sociey, make his life a burden to him, while the hero puts forth his sublime and gigantic exertions, pours out the last drop of blood in his veins, for the deliverance of his beloved Italy. We may affect to despise the immortal labours of a David Hare ; we may, when he is dead, turn back with pious indignation from his so-called unchristian and polluted corpse. We may do all this, and indeed we may do much worse things besides. But when death has supervened, when personal feelings, personal jealousies, personal animosities have all been hushed in the silence of the tomb, when the bitterness of personal rancour has given place to the calmness of the historic judgment, when posterity are in a position to read, in the calm, sober, steady, but not dazzling light of history, the achievements of these great men, then they spontaneously raise, in the temples of their hearts, those altars of homage and reverence which greatness claims at our hands, and which testify, in language of imperishable import, to the world's gratitude to its greatest benefactors and most illustrious heroes. The meek, humble, and crucified Jesus is extolled to the divine rank ; Mazzini's name has become the watch-word of human progress and

human liberty; David Hare stands forth from amongst his contemporaries—aye from amongst those who would fain have refused to him the rights of Christian burial, and whose names, let it be recorded to the eternal honour and dignity of human nature, have been forgotten—as the great champion and immortal apostle of English education in the East. Posterity never deal unjustly by the memories of world's great dead. Contemporaries, lost, bewildered, and amazed, amid the dazzling splendour, caused by the too near presence of these great luminaries, often feel only the heat, often feel the unpleasant warmth, but are unable to appreciate the broad streak of light which they cast upon the path of future generations—are unable to appreciate the greatness of their hearts, the nobility of their disposition, and splendour of their achievements.

Gentlemen, in addressing you on the present occasion, I may be said to perform a twofold duty. I am grateful to the memory of David Hare, along with the rest of my countrymen. In my case, however, personal considerations enhance the gravity of my obligations. My late lamented father was indebted for his medical education to David Hare. Through his sympathy, his kindness, his assistance, my father was enabled to overcome the resistance which he met from his orthodox parents, in his efforts to acquire for himself a medical education, and to lay the foundation of that career, with whose brilliant results it is not necessary for me to concern myself in this place. While employed as a teacher in the school, David Hare very generously allowed my father to absent himself several hours, during the day, to enable him to attend the lectures in the Medical College. This address, then, while it enables me to perform a national obligation, enables me, at the same time, to discharge a personal obligation, which since the death of my father, has assumed, in my estimation, a peculiarly solemn and sacred character.

Gentlemen, it is admitted on all hands, by those who have ever thought on the subject, that England has a noble mission to accomplish in the East—that she has a great duty to perform as regards her Eastern Dependency. Now, I ask, what is that mission? What is that duty? The mission of England in the east is to elevate the people of India, to emancipate them from the chains of ignorance, error and superstition, to lead them onward to a higher career of social, intellectual and political life—that, I conceive, under the orderings of Providence, to be the grand and predestined mission which England has to accomplish in the East. Noble and grand as that mission is, calculated, as it is, in many respects to stir, to their profoundest depths, the noble susceptibilities of the English people, I grieve to say that this great duty was not recognised, until many long years had elapsed after the English conquest of India. There might have been the impeachment of a Governor-General, there might have been a Burke denouncing the iniquities of Indian officials, pleading in strains of marvellous eloquence, on behalf of the suffering millions of this country. But such denunciations and protests had no effect whatever on the national conscience of England; they did not, in any way, influence the current of national thought or national feeling. England remained in profound ignorance of her noble mission, of her great duties towards her Eastern Dependency, the fulfilment of which would have covered her with immortal honour, and cast into the shade the lustre of her own great and glorious victories. In those days, the enlightenment and elevation of the people of India, were thought to be inconsistent with the maintenance of British power in the East. Talk of elevating the people of India, civilizing them, dispelling their ignorance, emancipating them from superstition! Why, you would lay the axe at the root of British power in India. So thought the great statesmen of the last century. Thus thought, too, English statesmen

in the early part of this century. Let me illustrate this remark by citing a case in point. Gentlemen, there was in the year 1811 a member of the House of Commons, whose name was Sir Robert Anstruther. I shall presently tell you who he was. But let me, in the first instance, draw your attention to the remarkable incident with which his name is so unhappily associated. Well, then, one evening in the year 1811, the question of native education was introduced quite incidentally, I believe, into the House of Commons. At once up rose Sir Robert Anstruther from his place, in astonishment and surprise. He knew not (unhappy man!) whether he was standing on his head or on his legs. He asked, whether it was intended to educate the people of India, and if it was so intended, whether it was really advisable to educate them? That was the language used in the year 1811, with reference to the education of the people of India. Now, who was this Sir Robert Anstruther? Well, he was no other than a late Chief Justice of Bengal. He was, therefore, supposed to be a great authority on India, and to know everything about the country. Why, he had sat with English judges in the Supreme Court, had listened to the addresses of English barristers, had served, dined, sported with Englishmen in India, had seldom come in contact with the natives of the country, in the varied relations of social life! Was he not then a great authority on all subjects connected with Indian progress and enlightenment? And this great authority was of opinion that it was unsafe, perilous to the maintenance of British supremacy, that natives of India should receive the benefits of education. It is no wonder, then, that English statesmen, who had never been to the country, should entertain similar views. Well, then, gentlemen, this was in the year 1811, but we are now approaching the year 1813, a year which was destined to witness a complete change in the educational

policy of the Government of India. In that year, on the renewal of the Company's Charter, a clause was introduced almost by stealth. It was introduced at the fag end of the debate, by a gentleman whose name I shall presently mention, because I am anxious to rescue that name from unmerited oblivion. That clause was of the deepest importance to the fortunes of India. It was to this effect, that a sum of £10,000 a year should be set apart for the revival and promotion of literature, the encouragement of learned natives of India, and the diffusion of a knowledge of the sciences and arts among the people of this country. I have given, I believe, almost the words of the section. Gentlemen, I say that the name of the author of this clause, of this benefactor of our race, should be rescued from oblivion, and engraven on the hearts of our countrymen. The name of this worthy man was Robert Percy Smith. He, too, was in Bengal. But he was in a very different capacity from Sir Robert Anstruther. He was Advocate-General of Bengal. In those happy times, Advocates-General thought it their duty to stand forward as champions of the people's rights and liberties, of their progress and enlightenment. On the motion, then, of Robert Percy Smith, late Advocate-General of Bengal, this clause was introduced in the India Bill of 1813, and a sum of £10,000 was, henceforward, to be devoted to the encouragement and cultivation of learning. Now, then, for the first time, was publicly recognised the great duty of England to educate the people of India. An important step had thus been gained towards the enlightenment of the people of India. But it was, indeed, through stages painfully slow, that the goal was eventually reached. The people of India might indeed be taught, they might receive instruction, they might learn the truths which their own science and their own literature placed within their reach. But they were to be

excluded, at least for the present, from the priceless treasures of Western thought and Western learning. English literature, English science, and English culture must remain to them a sealed book. But happily such a state of things was not to last very long; for while this sum of £10,000 was being expended, year after year, for the revival and cultivation of Oriental literature, there was a feeling growing in the native community of Bengal in favour of the acquisition of Western literature and Western science. We are an astute people. We are not so wholly devoid of sagacity and common sense as some people take us to be. Well, then, our fathers, with the astuteness characteristic of our race, at once saw that England's greatness was, to a certain extent at least, due to her noble literature, to the immortal truths taught by her science, and to the sublime morality which breathes through the burning words of her great writers and thinkers. England had become great by her literature, her science, her culture. Might not Bengal feebly grope about, in the same direction, and under the same guidance? Thus thought our fathers in the beginning of this century. Such were the hopes and aspirations which agitated the bosoms of those, whose patriotic efforts have placed within our reach the priceless boon of English education and English culture.

But astute as we are, we are at the same time essentially an intellectual people. Writers and speakers have again and again laid stress upon his trait of our mental constitution. There is, indeed, innate in us, a deep, passionate hankering after knowledge, in whatever shape and in whatever form, it may happen to be presented to us. I read, not long ago, an ariticle in the *Calcutta Review*, from the pen of Mr. Digby, in which that distinguished writer has likened this passion of ours to the intense curiosity, characteristic of the Athenians, of olden times. Guided alike by curiosity and self-interest,

our fathers resolved to educate their sons in the literature and science of England. Well, then, while this feeling in favour of English literature was gradually developing itself in the native community, there were living two men whose names and actions have since become a part of Indian history—two men whose names are remembered with heartfelt gratitude, and awaken the deepest veneration in our minds. One of them was he, the anniversary of whose death, we have met here to observe this afternoon, and the other was the illustrious Hindu reformer, Raja Ram Mohun Roy. These two remarkable men fostered this growing feeling, and endeavoured to lead it to a great practical result.

Through the exertions of Mr. David Hare, a meeting was held at the house of Sir Edward Hyde East, then Chief Justice of Bengal, to devise means for the establishment of a Hindu college. Were it not for an incident which is of importance, because it serves to illustrate the character of the Hindu reformer, I should not have thought it necessary to pause in this place, to refer to this meeting. Raja Ram Mohun Roy took great interest in the movement; but when his orthodox countrymen learnt that he was to be associated with them in this great work, they positively refused to have anything to do with it. No sooner was the Raja informed of this circumstance, than he at once withdrew himself from the movement, at the same time declaring that the work which had been initiated had his warmest sympathy, and would receive his hearty co-operation. Another meeting was held in May 1816. A committee was appointed; a subscription list was opened; money was collected, and on the 20th January 1817, the Hindu College was established. Now, gentlemen, there is one fact connected with the establishment of the Hindu College, which I am anxious pointedly to bring to your notice. The Hindu College was established entirely through the exertions of the people of

this country. In its inception it was Indian, in its progress it was Indian, and in its completion it was Indian. The Government had not contributed anything towards its maintenance, beyond providing for it a local habitation, seven years after it had been opened. It was not until 1825, when the firm of Barretto and Company had failed, and the Hindu College had lost all its funds, that the Government came forward to its rescue. I am anxious to emphasize upon this point, for more reasons than one. This noble temple of science, this magnificent institution, within whose walls we are gathered together this evening, to perform a holy duty, and which, I confidently predict, is destined, in the fulness of time, to achieve great things for this country, is like the Hindu College, Indian in its inception, Indian in its progress, and, if sufficient funds were forthcoming, would have been Indian in its completion. Thus there is a marked similarity between the inception, progress and completion of the Hindu College, and the inception, progress and completion of this temple of science, whose future success we all so devoutly pray for. By the establishment of the Hindu College, the way was prepared for the progress and enlightenment of the country. The Hindu College was now opened, but the £10,000 (we must not forget that £10,000) were being expended year after year, for the promotion and cultivation of Oriental literature. In the year 1824, the Sanskrit College was established to promote Sanskrit learning. In 1852, the Delhi College was opened for the encouragement of Arabic literature, the cultivation of Oriental science and the revival of Oriental literature in general. Towards the funds of this institution, I may here notice in passing, a magnificent sum was contributed by Nawab Itimut-Dowla of Delhi.

But in the meantime, repeated warning reached the authorities in India from the Home Government, which clearly indicated that the conscience of England was being

gradually roused to a sense of the importance of promoting a knowledge of Western science and Western literature, amongst the natives of India. In the year 1824, a despatch was received by the Government of India, a despatch from the pen of the celebrated James Mill, urging on the Government the necessity of directing their attention to the spread of a knowledge of English literature among the people of this country. But the despatch practically remained a dead letter. The cause of Oriental literature, in the meantime, triumphed. Then ten thousand pounds continued to be spent, year after year, upon the study of Sanskrit and Arabic. Such a state of things, however, was not to last very long. The time was fast approaching which was to witness a change in the educational policy of Government. It could not be, that a civilized Government could continue very long to shut out the stream of Western learning which was pouring in from all sides. Dr. Duff had arrived in the country, and in 1830 opened the General Assembly's Institution with five pupils, recommended by Raja Ram Mohun Roy. The object which the great Missionary had in view was to impart to Hindu youths the benefits of a liberal education, combined with the teaching of Christian doctrines. But was the task of educating and enlightening the people of India to be left to Christian missionaries? Was Government to take no part in this glorious duty? Was Government to reap no share of the honours of such a splendid harvest? Was it merely to confine itself to the spending, year after year, of large sums of money on what might be deemed, comparatively speaking, unprofitable branches of human learning? Thus the claims of English education gradually came to force themselves upon the attention of the authorities in India.

In the year 1835, matters had come to a crisis. In that year, the Committee of Public Instruction, the body which controlled the education of the country, found itself divided

into two separate parties, one advocating the claims of English education, the other those of Oriental learning. The Committee was equally divided, and there were distinguished names arrayed on opposite sides. Nothing could be done, and the business came to a standstill. It was at this juncture, when matters had reached a crisis, that Macaulay arrived in the country, as Law Member of the Supreme Council. Lord Bentinck at once appointed him President of the Committee of Public Instruction.

Gentlemen, it is not necessary that I should dwell, at any length, upon the English career of Macaulay. It is sufficient for me to say, that he was the son of Zachary Macaulay, a well-known philanthropist of his day, that he distinguished himself greatly in college, that he carried off the highest prizes at Cambridge, and that being returned a member of the House of Commons, he gave great promise of future excellence. Well, in 1835, Mr. Macaulay was appointed Law Member of the Supreme Council.

While the Committee of Public Instruction was in this predicament, Macaulay was appointed its president, and the momentous question that awaited his decision was this:— Was the cultivation of Oriental science and Oriental literature to give place to the cultivation of English science and English literature, or were things to remain as they were before, the Government grant being devoted to the promotion of Oriental learning? This was the solemn question that awaited decision at his hands. I may say, that no question of deeper importance could engage the attention of a statesman or politician. Zachary Macaulay, the father of Thomas Babington Macaulay, had helped to emancipate the Negro slaves, to enfranchise them from physical bondage, to give them that liberty which is the undoubted birth-right of every human being. But the bondage which his son was called upon to remove, was a bondage far more galling and oppressive in its character. It

was the bondage of ancient prejudices, hoary with age and consecrated by time ; it was the bondage of immemorial customs, handed down from father to son, through the long vista of rolling years ; it was the bondage of intellectual error, the gloom of deep moral darkness, which had to be removed. How was this to be effected ? How was this great result to be brought about ? Was it to be effected by the incantations of the Vedas, by the mutterings of the Puranas, by the recitation of passages from the Koran ? Or was it not rather to be effected by the healing balsam of Western literature and Western thought, by the life-giving influences of English learning and English education. I say that was the grand, the solemn issue, in regard to which Macaulay was called upon to pronounce a decision ; and we know how he decided this question. He gave his verdict in favour of the Anglicists. A decision so far-reaching in its consequences, so powerfully affecting the destinies of after-generation of India, never issued from the Council Chamber of Calcutta. This decision was dated the 2nd of February, 1835. It would be a work of hours to go through his lengthy document. But I propose to present to you, in a brief compass, the leading arguments contained in this remarkable minute. We are not, says Macaulay, fettered by the Charter Act of 1813. The clause in the Charter Act says that literature is to be revived, that educated natives are to be encouraged, that a knowledge of the arts and sciences is to be diffused amongst the people of India. But it does not specify whether the medium of instruction is to be English or any Oriental language. We are likewise, says Macaulay, unfettered by any solemn or express obligation. We are, therefore, free to spend the Government grant, in any way we think best, and surely we owe it to ourselves to spend the grant in educating the people in those things which are most worth knowing. English is a great deal more worth knowing than

either Sanskrit or Arabic. It is, therefore, the obvious duty of Government to promote a knowledge of English literature and English science in preference to the science and literature of the East. The semi-barbarous Russians, says Macaulay, have, in the course of 150 years, under the fostering influences of Western science and Western literature, emerged from almost primeval barbarism. Why should we not expect a similar result, in the case of the highly enlightened and intelligent Hindus? It was for these reasons, and I have stated his arguments in the briefest compass possible, that he decided the case in favour of the Anglicists.

Gentlemen, I am afraid Macaulay is not a special favourite with us. We cannot easily forget his unjust strictures upon our national character; we cannot forget the storm of abuse he has so mercilessly poured upon us. It has been remarked by a great writer (Mr. Lecky, in his Leaders of Irish Opinion) that a nation's character is its most sacred possession, and he who unjustly vilifies and blackens a people's character, can have no claims to their gratitude or respect. I can easily sympathise with this feeling, as regards Macaulay. But, I say, let the faults of the Essayist be forgiven in the remembrance of the splendid services he has rendered to the unborn generations of India. We cannot forget that Macaulay was the author of the Indian Penal Code; that he was the author of the great Education Minute, and that he helped in the framing of the 87th Section of the Charter Act of 1833, a section which should be engraven on the hearts of the rulers of India. That section declares,—"No native of the said territories or any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company." I repeat, then, we should forget the

faults and prejudices of the Essayist, in the recollection of the memorable services he has rendered to the country in the cause of Native progress and education.

Macaulay's minute is dated the 2nd of February 1835, and Lord William Bentinck gave effect to it by his Resolution dated the 7th March 1835. The triumph of the Anglicists was complete, and English education was now placed upon a safe and secure basis. And under the fostering care of several Governors-General, whose names are dear to Indian History, the cause of English education underwent a rapid and marvellous development. Under Sir Edward Ryan, was introduced the system of State scholarships, which has helped many a poor scholar to complete his education and render himself useful to his family and his countrymen. Then, during the administration of Lord Hardinge, Mr. Hay Cameron, President of the General Committee of Public Instruction, and one of the best friends India ever had, forwarded a despatch to the Court of Directors, recommending the establishment of a University in Bengal. The Court of Directors thought that the scheme was premature, and it was, in consequence, allowed to fall through. Lord Dalhousie, who paid very great attention to the question of Native welfare and Native advancement, placed the educational department under the control of a Director of Public Instruction. By a despatch of the Court of Directors, dated 1854, Universities were established in the Presidency Towns of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and the grant-in-aid system was also, at the same time, introduced. The establishment of Universities gave fresh impetus to the cause of high education throughout India.

Matters were progressing satisfactorily, in this manner, when Lord Mayo became Governor-General. I do not wish to speak harshly of him. His life and administration have, indeed, become matters of history. But his sad and unhappy

end, while it is still fresh in our minds, must inspire us with a feeling of tenderness in dealing with the most prominent features of his administration. But I am bound to say his educational policy was retrograde. It was under his administration, that Sir George Campbell commenced what one might fitly describe as a regular raid against the colleges of Bengal. Sir George abolished the Berhampur College and the Krishnaghur College. The fate of Hugli College trembled in the balance. And, in short, he wanted to constitute the Presidency College into a kind of metropolitan institution for the whole of Bengal, abolishing all the other institutions for high education in Bengal. He was cut short in his precipitate career, by the representations of the Government of India, at the instance of the British Indian Association, backed by the entire population of Bengal. The cause of high education is now sufficiently safe and secure, and we may congratulate ourselves upon that circumstance. Indeed gentlemen, I may say, that I know of nothing which is more calculated to inspire in the minds of the people of India a feeling of genuine devotion for the English people and the English Government, than the unspeakable blessings of high education, introduced in this country, under the auspices of English rule. If, at this moment, the connection which now subsists between India and England were to cease, (may God avert that day of our calamity ! I ask, what is it that would awaken a grateful reminiscence in our minds regarding that connection ? It would be the conviction deep, solemn and heart-felt, that under the auspices of England, for the first time, there were planted in this country the seeds of a progressive civilization, heralded by the genius of English literature.

But gentlemen, while we are congratulating ourselves upon the advance of English education in Bengal, let us, for one moment, transfer ourselves from the banks of the

Ganges to the banks of the Jumna, and fix our eyes upon the decaying ruins of the great and ancient city of Delhi. Delhi too, at one time, had a College which was established as early as 1825. The College does not now exist. It was; but it has ceased to be. I ask, then, are the people of Delhi, the inhabitants of that great city, unworthy of the benefits of high education? Is it on that account that the sentence of fate has been pronounced against their college? The Government, no doubt, has its own reasons in vindication of its conduct. The necessity of economy and retrenchment, it is said, has brought about the abolition of the Delhi College. I respect the principle of economy. Economy is a great thing and a good thing. It is a good thing for men; it is a better thing for associations and corporations, and I should say, by far the very best thing for governments, especially for a government situated as the Government of of India is. Therefore, if it were from considerations of economy that the Government had been led to abolish the Delhi College, we should not have had probably much reason to complain of. But, gentlemen, is it after all correct to say that consideration of economy, that stress of financial pressure, have brought about the abolition of this cherished seat of learning? I wish to speak with the greatest possible respect of the Government of India. But I am bound to judge of the Government by its acts. Is it a fact that the maintenance of the Delhi College constituted a source of financial burden to the Government, and was the College absorbing any considerable portion of the public revenues?

Let us examine facts. The Delhi College had an endowment of over a lac of Rupees, left by the Nawab Itimut-Dowlah, and over and above that endowment, the College received from the Government a sum of Rs. 12,000 a year. The Government could not spend Rs. 12,000, a year, for the maintenance of an ancient and time-honoured seat of learning,

an institution which was doing most useful work, and from whose walls had emerged some of the best and truest and most trusted of men in the North-Western Provinces! A Government enjoying a revenue of fifty crores of Rupees could surely afford to pay a sum of Rs. 12,000 a year, towards the maintenance of one of the noblest edifices of learning in the country, and which reflected so much honour upon the Government which lent its aid for its support. Talk of the expenditure of Rs. 12,000 for the maintenance of the Delhi College! Why, the Delhi Assemblage cost sixty lacs of Rupees, the Simlah exodus costs, year after year, four lacs of Rupees, and ever since 1874, your military expenditure has increased by one crore of Rupees a year. I have no wish to find fault with Government for spending these vast sums of money. All this expenditure might be necessary. But I do mean to say that the Delhi College is also necessary. If it were necessary to introduce measures of retrenchment, they could easily have been introduced with respect to various departments under the Government, without sweeping away from the face of the country a noble edifice of English philanthropy and benevolence.

But, gentlemen, I am glad to be able to say that the people of Delhi will not allow themselves to fall asleep over the abolition of their famous seat of learning. A fund is being raised, and twenty-five thousand Rupees, I understand, have already been subscribed in aid of this object. And I do hope that in the course of the next few years, Delhi will have a college of its own, this time depending no longer on the generosity of the Government, but the product and outcome of native effort, public spirit and philanthropy, bearing witness to the deep value we attach to the spread of English education in this country, and the sacrifices we are prepared to make in furtherance of this object.

Gentlemen, in dwelling upon the question of native educa-

tion, I feel tempted to refer to another question, with which it is intimately connected, and which may be said to form a kind of corollary to it. The question of native education is inseparably bound up with the question of native advancement. The advancement of the people of this country to the higher offices of trust and responsibility must march hand in hand with their increasing knowledge and enlightenment. I do not, however, for one moment, mean to assert that he who receives his education at a Government college, *ifso facto*, has a claim to an appointment under Government. No such monstrous proposition has ever been started by any public man, whose utterances are entitled to any weight or consideration. But this I do mean to assert, and assert most emphatically, that inasmuch as education has made such great progress among the people, inasmuch as their minds have been enlightened, their character elevated, their morals refined, it is but fair that they should have an adequate share in the government of their own country. Before 1833 it could, perhaps, with justice, have been urged against us, that by our education, our character and our training, we were not fitted to perform the difficult and responsible duties of a highly civilized administration. No such charge can now lie against us. Education has since then made great progress amongst us, and I may say, without fear of challenge or contradiction, that at the present moment our intelligence is such, our ability and integrity are such—thanks to the fostering care of the benign Government that presides over our destinies—that we may justly claim, at the hands of our rulers, an equitable share in the administration of our own country. I would not, however, rest our claim to this important privilege solely upon the consideration to which I have just referred. I would rather place them upon the solemn deliberate pledges which have been so often and so graciously given to the people of this country by the English Crown and

the English Legislature. I do not, gentlemen, propose in this place to refer to these pledges. But I am more concerned to point out, that those who have ever thought on the subject, have all recognised the intimate connection and relationship that there is between the question of Indian education and Indian advancement. Let me, in the first place, quote a resolution of Lord Hardinge, dated the 10th October 1844. His Lordship says, in this resolution,—"In every possible case, a preference should be given in the selection of candidates for public employment, to those who have been educated in the institutions of Government or other institutions, and have distinguished themselves." It is clear that the illustrious framer of this resolution regarded the question of the education of the people, as being an integral portion of the much wider question of admitting them to a share in the government of their own country. Let me now submit, for your consideration, an extract from the speech of Lord Landsdowne, delivered on the occasion of the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833. Lord Lansdowne observed,—"Their Lordships would be remiss in the performance of the high duties which devolved upon them, if they did not secure to the numerous natives of Hindustan, the ample development of all their mental endowments and moral qualifications. It was a part of the new system which he had to propose to their lordships, that to every office in India, every native of whatsoever caste, sect or religion should be equally admissible, and he hoped that government would seriously endeavour to give the fullest effect to this arrangement, which would be as beneficial to the people themselves, as it would be advantageous to the economical reforms now in progress, in different part of India."

Gentlemen, I may here observe, that no government which sought for permanence should be without the safe guard of a nation's affection, bought and secured by a timely concession

of those just rights and privileges, which, written by the hand of Heaven, can never be withdrawn by any human authority, however high or respected it might be. The most illustrious of rulers have always recognised and acted upon this principle. The great Macedonian conqueror sought to establish the proud fabric of his colossal empire upon the sure foundation of the gratitude of those, whose armies he had vanquished and whose territories he had despoiled. When the Persian empire lay prostrate at his feet, when Darius was a refugee from home and country, Alexander, instead of giving way to feelings which were natural to the occasion, sought to conciliate the affections and gain the good will of his new subjects. He himself adopted the Persian dress, married a Persian wife, and encouraged his officers and men to marry amongst the women of Persia. In the same way, the Romans valued the good will and confidence of their subject races, and spared no pains to secure them. I repeat, it has always been the settled policy of the most successful of conquerors, to create for themselves an impregnable wall of defence against intestine revolts and foreign aggressions, by evoking, on their behalf, the enthusiastic gratitude and affection of those over whom they have been called upon to rule. I rejoice to think that the English rulers of India are gradually rising to a solemn sense of their duties in this respect. May this sense deepen ; may it powerfully influence the policy of the government of India, so that England may accomplish her great mission in the East, and India once again raise her head amongst the nations of the earth, regenerated, disenthralled, emancipated from the chains of ignorance, error, and superstition.

We have met here this evening to observe the anniversary of the death of David Hare. How shall we show our appreciation of his immortal services, in the cause of English education in this country ? Aye, assuredly by supplementing

the great work which he began, by working for the same cause, for the accomplishment of which he lived and died. He worked for the elevation of India ; he worked for the regeneration of this country ; he worked to promote Indian progress. This is neither the time nor the place to dilate upon those considerations which so largely enter into a discussion of the question of native progress. But there is one point upon which I am anxious to lay special stress. We suffer from an innate trait of disposition which seriously interferes with our progress. We are incapable of sustained, continued, prolonged effort, which is so necessary to individual success, as it is all-essential for national greatness. We do things by fits and starts, and in a hap-hazard style. I repeat, we are devoid of the power of steady and unfaltering application which has contributed not a little to the success and the greatness of European nations. Unless we are capable of arduous and continuous work, of sustained and unflagging perseverance, there is, I am afraid, but little hope of our being able to do much to regenerate our country. No doubt, gentlemen, this matter must have been emphasized upon, times without number, by previous speakers and writers. But now that we are gathered together to pay the tribute of our homage and respect to the memory of David Hare, let us swear by his sacred remains and by the recollection of his immortal services, that we shall work as ceaselessly, as continuously, as energetically, as did the Father of English education in Bengal, for the welfare of those whom he loved so dearly.

The observance of this anniversary proves conclusively, that gratitude forms a fundamental trait in our national character. We are indeed essentially a greateful people. By association, by instinct, by habit, we are a greateful people. I know there are those who would blacken our character, who would calumniate us and deprive us of one of the

noblest elements of human character. There is, for instance, Mr. Ward, who has been writing a book on the Hindus. In that book, he says, that in Sanskrit we has no such word as gratitude. Our distinguished Chairman will, no doubt, be able to enlighten us on this point. But says Mr. Ward, there is no word for gratitude in the Sanskrit language, and therefore, by an irresistible process of reasoning, he comes to the conclusion that the people of India are all ungrateful. Aye forsooth, we are all ungrateful, we who, for the last quarter of a century and more, have been meeting together, year after year, to revive in the depths of our minds the recollection of the immortal services of our great benefactor, David Hare! Aye forsooth, we are an ungrateful people, with whom the names of our benefactors, of our Duffs, our Ryans, our Bethunes and our Phears, have become household words. Yes, we are ungrateful, and ungrateful to those who are not deserving of gratitude. We are ungrateful to our Kirkwoods, our D'oylys and our Moselys. We are incapable of prostituting this noble feeling for the sake of those, who have no claims upon our affection, and are unworthy of our gratitude. I repeat we are essentially a grateful people, but we live in unhappy times. Where are our Duffs, our Ryans, our Mouats, our Hares and our Bethunes? Have these illustrious benefactors of our race left us for ever? Have their mantles fallen upon none of their countrymen? Has the spirit which animated their bosoms been, for ever, extinguished? And are we to carry on the struggle for national regeneration, alone, unaided and unsympathised with. If so it must be, let it be so. If such is the will of Providence, let us bow to his supreme law. Let us then, my countrymen, learn to rely upon ourselves. The great God of truth and light helps those who helps themselves. Depending upon our own energies, upon our own strength, the victory assuredly will be ours. Let us infuse this spirit

of self-reliance, this spirit of self-help in to our countrymen and a great day may yet dawn upon this hapless country. There will then spring up from this abode of darkness, ignorance and error, this battle-ground of hostile races and creeds, a civilization which will be the wonder and admiration of mankind. The future civilization of India will blend all that is great, noble, manly and worthy of imitation in the civilization of the West, with all that is spiritual, gentle, tender, sweet, and benignant in the civilization of the East. This is the goal we hanker after,—to build a noble structure from the decayed elements of a byegone civilization ; and when this colossal fabric is raised, the foremost names that will be associated with it, will be those of David Hare and Thomas Babington Macaulay.

INDIAN UNITY.

The following address on Indian Unity was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Benerjea at a meeting of the Student's Association, held on the 16th March 1878 in the Medical College Theatre, Calcutta.

GENTLEMEN,

It has been remarked by Tennyson somewhere in his poems that the path of human progress is streaked with blood, that the car of human civilization rolls forward amid the corpses of men, women and children. This remark seems to me to be pregnant with truth. The history of the human race abundantly proves it. The Asiatic invasion of Alexander superficially considered seems but a long catalogue of wanton bloodshed, of indiscriminate slaughter. But if you examine the matter a little deeper, another feature of the case presently reveals itself to view. The Asiatic invasion of Alexander served for the first time to bring the East and the West into close and intimate contact, served for the first time to bring the Western mind into close and intimate communion with the Eastern mind. And what was the result of this contact, this communion? Eastern science with its amazing results, with its complicated method, with its marvellous developments, for the first time lay unfolded before the awe-struck gaze of the Greecian people. From amid the blood and confusion of battle, from amid the clanging of martial music, from amid the groans of the dead

and the dying, the Greek mind seized with wonderful grasp those cardinal principles of Eastern science, which were henceforth to become the regulating maxims of Western science, and which in the fulness of time were to confer such unspeakable and untold blessings upon the human race. A party of *savans* had accompanied the expedition of Alexander. These men were the intellectual beacons of the age in which they lived, men who have left the imperishable stamp of their genius upon the thought and culture of succeeding generations. These wise men of the West had access to the scientific records of the Assyrians and the Chaldeans. There they discovered that the two methods under which scientific investigations had been carried on in the East, were observation and experiment. Observation and experiment had been in the East the prolific mother of great discoveries. Nature, when questioned under the guidance of this two-fold method, had yielded up the hidden secrets that lay embosomed within her. Observation and experiment had done great things for Eastern science. Might they not be made to perform a similar duty for Western science ? So spoke Aristotle and the band of illustrious men by whom he was surrounded. A new era dawns upon the history of Greecian science. Observation and experiment were now to regulate Western science, as they had before regulated Eastern science. The blood therefore that was shed in the Greek expedition was not shed in vain. The treasure that was lavished in that expedition, was not lavished in vain. Out of that blood, out of that treasure, there rose the proud fabric of European science. There was thus, under the orderings of Providence, a distinct mission associated with the expedition of Alexander. That mission was to lay deep and secure the foundation-stone of the noble temple of Western science upon the firm and immutable basis of observation and experiment.

In the same way the Roman Empire had a mission of its own to accomplish. Roman civilization followed in the path of Roman conquest. The legionaries of Rome bore aloft the banner of human progress. Under Roman influences, Europe emerged from her primeval barbarism. But the great mission of Rome, was not accomplished, her predestined course in history was not run till Christ had appeared on the scene, till she had prepared men's minds for the acceptance of those great, those sublime, those eternal truths for which the immortal founder of Christianity lived and died. What were those truths which Christ preached? What were those principles which he sought to impress on the minds of men; and for which, when the hour came, he offered himself up a meek sacrifice on the blessed cross. The sum and substance of Christ's teachings is embraced in the simple but comprehensive formula of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. Christ taught that all men were equal, he taught that every man who drew the vital air was the equal of his fellow man. He taught that in Heaven's great book, in the eternal rolls of light, there was no distinction between the black man and the white man, between the European and the Asiatic, between the Roman and the barbarian. And the policy, the precepts, the maxims of imperial Rome had prepared men's minds for the admission of this great principle of equality. Roman Law admitted of no distinction between the Roman-born, and him who was not so born. In the eyes of the Roman Law, all Roman subjects were equal. There was not a right, not a privilege, not an immunity which a Roman enjoyed and which was not shared by the obscurest inhabitant of the most distant part of the Roman Empire. There was not an office in the state to which a Roman subject might not aspire. He might aspire to fill the senatorial rank, he might aspire to be the governor of a province, the commander of an

army or the confidential adviser of his sovereign. Rome's mission, then, was accomplished when under the shadows of her imperial throne, Christ first taught in his simple and noble eloquence, the great principle of equality, that principle which was to receive its last solemn seal and sanction amid the blood and smoke of the great French Revolution.

Rome then had mission of her own to accomplish. There was a mission associated with the expedition of Alexander. And am I to understand that England has no mission in the East to accomplish? Aye, she has a glorious mission to fulfil here, a mission nobler far than it ever fell to the lot of Greek, Macedonian or Roman to accomplish. It is England's mission in the East to save, regenerate, emancipate from the chains of ignorance, error and superstition, 250 millions of human beings, to heal the wounds that have been inflicted on them by the rapacity of their former rulers, to develop in them a self-reliant, manly, energetic character, to spread through the land the great blessings of peace, contentment and happiness, but above all it is England's noble mission in the East to help towards the consummation of Indian unity, to reconcile the jarring conflicts of the diverse Indian nationalities to bring them nearer together, to evoke in them a sentiment of brotherhood and make them feel that they have to make common cause for the redress of common grievances.

Gentlemen, I cannot help thinking that it is our proud privilege to live in one of the most interesting epochs in the history of our country, one of those epochs, which, if I am at all allowed to take a forecast of the future, will not be without its influences on the fortunes of after generations. Those fierce animosities, those bitter dissensions, those degrading passions which in the last and the preceding centuries had converted this beautiful country of ours into one vast ensanguined plain, have now happily subsided, and we live

in an era of unexampled peace, prosperity and happiness. For this great result, we are indebted to the British Government. If at this moment, the semi-barbarous hordes of Afghanistan, bursting our barriers, are not sweeping across our country, it is because of the omnipotent might of the British Ruler. If, at this moment, happily the sentiment of brotherhood has been universally evoked in the minds of the Indian races, it is because under the auspices of British rule, the varied and diversified peoples that inhabit this great country have been welded together into a compact and homogeneous mass. But I ask, gentlemen, is this after all a season of unmixed gratulation? Have we no mournful reflections to darken the horizon of our thoughts? May we not, occupying the vantage ground that we now happen to occupy, empancipate ourselves from the present, look back into the past and question the past? May we not resuscitate the dying embers of a by-gone age and endeavour to fan them forth into a living flame, full of light for our future guidance? May we not, occupying the intellectual eminence that we have attained, invoke the genius of history and call upon her to declare what were the circumstances, what the incidents, what the causes which brought about our fall and have perpetuated our degradation? The Goddess of History thus questioned, is sure to return one answer, and it will be an answer at once decisive and uneqivocal in its, character. The Goddess will answer—"Indians, your dissensions, your jealousies, your animosites, have brought about your fall and have perpetuated your degradation. Learn to respect the holy principle of union. Learn to love one another as brothers. Learn to make common cause for the redress of common grievances, and the great God of nations, the Protector of the rights of fallen peoples may yet from his high place in Heaven look upon you with compassion, may yet in his infinite mercy ordain the dawning of a bright day

for your country." So will speak the Goddess of History and she will point to facts in Indian History in support of her statement.

But, perhaps, it will be said that the question of Indian unity, of the intellectual, moral and social union of the Indian peoples, is a dream, is a chimera, the phantom of an excited imagination. It will be said that India throughout the long period of her chequered history, has presented the spectacle of a country, inhabited by peoples, separated by language, separated by religion, separated by manners, and customs, separated in short by everything that constitutes the distinctive difference between races and peoples. Why then, it will be said, at this time of day commit the monstrous absurdity of talking of Indian unity ?

Gentlemen, I have stated the arguments against Indian unity as strongly as the case admits of, in order to point out that these arguments are not wholly unanswerable in their character. I invite your attention once more to the terms of the proposition you are considering. India is inhabited by peoples separated by language, by religion, by manners, and customs. Is their intellectual, social, moral union possible ? I say such a union is possible—is practicable ; and I appeal to the facts of Indian history in support of the statement. Let us take the example of Switzerland, to begin with. Switzerland, you are aware, is a federal country, enjoying the blessings of a republican government. Switzerland is divided into a number of cantons. Well, there are Roman Catholic cantons and there are Protestant cantons. There are French speaking cantons, and there are German speaking cantons. But in spite of these differences of language and religion, Switzerland is a united country, and never was the strength of Swiss union, the compactness of that homogeneity more strikingly exemplified, than on that memorable day when that great oppressor of our race,

Napoleon Bonaparte endeavoured to wipe out this little republic from the face of Europe. Take again the case of Belgium. Belgium is a united country, and it would have been truly remarkable if it were not, considering how limited its area is. Well in Belgium, there are the Wallons, and there is the Flemish speaking population, there are again Roman Catholic Belgians, and there are Protestant Belgians. But Belgium is a united country in spite of religious and linguistic differences. Let us now take the case of Germany. In Germany, we do not, indeed, meet with those strongly marked linguistic differences, we notice in the case of Belgium and Switzerland, but I know of no country where in modern times the spirit of religious difference, I had almost said, the spirit of bitter religious hatred, has been carried on to a greater or more extravagant length than in this confederated German Empire. And if it were not that this was the 19th century, that Germany was placed in the midst of the hallowed, the consecrated, the peaceful influences of modern civilization, Germany would to-day have presented the spectacle of a country, deluged with blood, shed on the alter of religious differences. Germany is united in spite of strongly marked religious differences in her people. I shall take one more instance, and this time it will be Italy. Italy, you are aware, was united in 1870. But the idea was a very old one. Dante had sung of Italian unification. The highest minds in Italy had aspired to bring about the consummation of that great event. Again and again there rose up poets, princes, philosophers and statesmen, with whom the great dream of their lives was the dream of Italian unification. But it was believed there were insuperable obstacles to the unification of Italy. The Italians had become a degraded people. They had forgotten the glorious memories of the past. They had forgotten the great deeds of their sires. They had forgotten the patriotism of Brutus,

the eloquence of Cicero, the martial achievements of Cæsar. Differences of language added to the confusion. The Neapolitan understood not the Roman, the Roman understood not the Venetian. They were all brothers, born of the same illustrious progenitors, the inheritors of the same great memories, yet they knew not one another, understood not one another, they were strangers in each other's sight. But was there no hope for Italy? Was she for ever to remain in the grovelling depths of continued misery? Aye no. The day of Italy's deliverence was fast approaching. The fiat had gone forth, the celestial mandate had been issued that Italy was to be saved. The hour had arrived. The men were there. Under the guidance of Garibaldi and Mazzini Italy rose to the conception of Italian unity; and through acts of noble and unheard-of self-sacrifice, which have shed lasting glory on the honoured names of the martyred patriots of Italy, the Italian people brought about the unity and the independence of their country. The unification of Italy was effected notwithstanding dialectical differences.

Thus, then, gentlemen, from the instances I have just cited, we are, naturally led to conclude that there may be religious differences, there may be linguistic differences but they do not form insuperable barriers to the consummation of national unity. A point has thus been gained in the argument. But it is my contention that the considerations I have just urged against national unity lose much of their weight when we bear in mind the wholly altered circumstances under which we now live. Modern India is very different from ancient India. The conditions of life in modern India are very different from the conditions of life in ancient India. We may deprecate the change. We may regret the circumstance. But there is no denying the fact that we are in the midst of great revolution along whose

current we are irresistibly borne. English civilization has been introduced into our midst, and along with it have been introduced certain revolutionary agencies of mighty potency, which are operating with powerful effect upon the framework of Indian Society, thinning away its vital parts and greatly helping the cause of Indian unity. Foremost amongst these agencies, English Education claims our attention. The traveller who visits the cities of Delhi and Agra is struck with wonderment at the magnificent works of architectural beauty which still grace these once imperial capitals. They remind us of Moslem supremacy ? they are the silent monumental records of by-gone times. They remind us of the generosity and humanity of Akbar, of the splendour of Shah Jehan; of the religious bigotry of Aurangzebe. England indeed cannot boast of such monuments of architectural magnificence ; but her claims to the lasting gratitude of posterity will rest upon a surer, more permanent and durable basis, upon the conviction which is deep and earnest in us, *viz.*, that under the auspices of English rule were, for the first time, sown the seeds of a civilization containing the germs of India's future greatness, of her political, moral and intellectual regeneration.

The question might be asked how is English Education helping the cause of Indian union. I have mentioned that one of the obstacles to national unity is the diversity of dialects that prevails in India. English Education partly removes this difficulty by supplying a common medium of communication between the educated classes. I may not know Maharati. An educated native of Bombay may not know Bengali. But we can hold intercourse with one another, correspond with one another through the common medium of the English language. Nor is this all. English Education has uplifted all who have come under its influence to a common platform of thoughts, feelings and aspirations.

Educated Indians whether of Bengal, Madras, Bombay or the North Western Provinces are brought up under the same intellectual, moral, and political influences. Kindred hopes, feelings and ideas are thus generated. The educated classes throughout India are thus brought nearer together.

Railways also are greatly helping to bring about a feeling of unity and sympathy between the Indian races. Railways have abridged distances. The distance between Calcutta and Delhi is not 1,400 miles but is only a question of about 44 hours. The distance between Calcutta and Lahore is not 1,600 miles but is only a question of about 52 hours. The distance between Calcutta and Bombay is not 1,900 miles but is only a question of about 61 hours. The means of communication being so easy, we have taken more largely to travelling. We know one another now much more intimately than we ever did before. Those prejudices which had separated us for ages are fast disappearing, and the patriot sees in the distant horizon the faint streaks of that dawn which are to usher in the day of his country's regeneration and union. Railways are thus helping to promote Indian union.

The existence of a native Press is also calculated to bring about the same result. If I had addressed you day before yesterday, I should have said that the native Press was a free Press. But within the last forty-eight hours a law has been hurriedly enacted which has put a gag into the mouth of the Vernacular Press, has enveloped its fate in deep gloom, has dealt a terrible blow at the cause of Indian progress and enlightenment. The law which has been enacted, and the circumstances under which it has been enacted strongly remind us of our degradation, of the stretches to which the exercise of arbitrary power might be carried in this country, and how it has become necessary that we should interpose an effective and at the same time a thoroughly cons-

titutional barrier against the reckless exercise of such great power. This is not the time nor the place to enter into a discussion of the merits of this most important measure of Law, but there are one or two remarks which I feel bound to make with reference to a matter which must be uppermost in the minds of most of us here present. The Law has been described to be an "enabling" measure, a "preventive" measure, a "non-punitive" measure. Now, the concluding section of this non-punitive Act declares that nothing in that Act will exempt a person punished under it from being punished under the provisions of any other Act against which he may have offended. Now let us take the case of an unfortunate editor who has given security and who in the opinion of the Magistrate has been guilty of criminal intimidation. He forfeits his security and he is also liable to punishment under the Penal Code. Under this preventive, this non punitive Law, a man may thus be punished twice. The Law was passed at one and the same sitting, the standing orders having been suspended. The usual course is, when a measure is introduced into the Supreme Council, to refer it to a Select Committee. The Bill is also published in the Government Gazette, so that the public might have an opportunity of discussing the merits of the proposed measure of law. Nothing of the kind was done in the present instance. These formalities were quietly dispensed with, and the Bill became Law, the same day it was introduced. Now I ask what justification was there for this undue and precipitate haste. Was the atmosphere infected with treason? Were daggers floating about in the air? Were the Russians knocking at the gates of Peshawur? Was this great Empire, the embodiment of English justice and humanity in the East, this empire resting upon the willing allegiance, the steadfast devotion and the fervant loyalty of 250 millions of human beings tottering to its

foundations? If there is peace, happiness, contentment throughout the length and breadth of this great country, I repeat what need was there for this precipitate haste? But I forget Sir Alexander Arbuthnot has told us that it was intended to avoid agitation and hence was it that the Bill became Law at one and the same sitting. The Government, I venture to think, is greatly mistaken if it really believes that by hastily carrying the Bill, it will avoid agitation. There will be an agitation on a vast, extensive scale, commensurate with the greatness of the occasion, and the importance of the subject. There will be an agitation which shall extend from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from the Indus to the Brahmaputra, an agitation which shall be truly national in its character and shall include the varied and diversified races and peoples that inhabit this great country. And I declare I shall cheerfully bear my humble share in this great national work. It matters not who sympathizes with us, and who does not. We shall do our duty manfully, fearlessly and courageously. It matters not if we are cried down as "stump orators." It matters not if we are described as "young men ambitious for fame and distinction." It matters not if our motives are misconstrued and we are held up to the ridicule and, it may be, the execration of our European rulers. I repeat, we shall do our duty fearlessly, manfully and courageously. We shall borrow a noble page from England's glorious history, that page wherein are blazoned forth in characters of glittering gold (O God! may the spirit of those words last till the end of time) "England expects every man to do his duty." We shall borrow that page from England's history, fasten it on our banner, and unfurl that banner before the gaze of our own countrymen and of stagnant Asia. India too expects every man to do his duty.

The Brahmo Samaj may also powerfully help to bring about Indian unity. Amongst the obstacles to national

unity, difference of religion occupies not wholly an unimportant place. The Brahmo Samaj, by uniting Indians of varied creeds and beliefs under the bonds of a common faith, may help to remove this great difficulty and foster and promote Indian union. And it seems to me that the Brahmo Samaj possesses special facilities for bringing about this great end. The creed of simple monotheism which it preaches and holds up for our acceptance has in all ages and times possessed an almost irresistible attraction for the minds of thoughtful Indians. But let me not be misunderstood. The Brahmoism which is thus to knit together the varied creeds of India under the bond of a common faith must not be merely the Brahmoism of prayers, of thanksgivings and meditations. It must be the Brahmoism of practical life. It must be that form of Brahmoism which, going deep into the life of the individual, must influence his every-day conduct. It must be that form of Brahmoism, which while inculcating the great principles of the unity and the omniscience of the Deity, will at the same time, teach man that his highest duty is to love his fellow man, to serve him, to work for him and to live and die, if necessary, for his happiness, his prosperity and welfare.

Thus then, gentlemen, it appears that the circumstances under which we live are wholly different from those of ancient India. Any arguments, therefore, founded upon the past of India, can have no application in the present day, the facts being so different. But if in spite of the arguments I have urged, it should be thought that the consummation of Indian unity must necessarily take such a long time that for all practical purposes it must be pronounced to be impossible of realization, I ask what possible difficulty would there be to the unification of the interests of the educated classes spread through the different parts of India ? We are not separated by language ; English supplies us with a common medium

of communication, and removes one of the great difficulties to national union. I know there are those who would give worlds to create dissensions amongst us. I know there are 'those who would raise mountain barriers between us, who would interpose an ever widening gulf of bitter animosities between us, who would rend assunder the bonds of sympathy which ought to subsist between us, brothers born of the same mother. And these men would fain be our leaders, our guides, our instructors. I know not how you regard their tricks, but for my part, my feelings towards them are those of pure, simple, unmitigated contempt and abhorrence. Sometime ago an influential journal, published in one of the most important cities in the North Western Provinces, had an article headed "Bengali Babus and India." Well, in that article the writer remarked that the Bengalis possessed special aptitude to master Law, Medicine and the lower Mathematics. Aye forsooth, the Bengalis possessed some capacity to master *the lower Mathematics*. And the writer ventured to make this statement in the face of the broad fact that there was at least one Bengali gentleman, your worthy President, who passed a most difficult Mathematical examination, perhaps the most difficult in the world, in a way highly creditable to himself and honourable to his country. Well, the writer in question, after having treated his readers to this most important piece of information, went on to observe that the natives of other parts of India would not have the Bengalis as associates, much less as leaders. Now, gentlemen, I think I speak the sentiments of my educated countrymen, when I say that we Bengalis do not aspire to occupy the position of leaders. We are only anxious that the light which is in us, that the light under which we have basked for so many long years, should spread over the whole of India and chase away that cimmerian darkness which has settled over the intellectual and moral atmosphere

of this great country. And I am in a position to give the lie direct to the other part of the statement to which I have referred. Last summer, gentlemen, an important mission carried me through the whole of India, and wherever I went, I was received with open arms and treated as a brother by my countrymen from the banks of the Beas to the briny waters that wash the coast of Madras.

There may thus be a unification of the interests of educated India; and is not such union necessary and desirable? Have we no grievances to redress? I do not put this question by way of reflection upon the Government of this country. Every country, however well governed, has its grievances. The French have their grievances, the Germans have their grievances, the Swiss have their grievances, and even the English enjoying the freest institutions in the world have their grievances also. It would indeed have been truly remarkable if a country situated as India is, without the blessings of representative institutions, had no grievances to redress, no complaints to make. And is it not necessary, in order that we might obtain the redress of our grievances, that the voice of united India should be heard with respect to them? United representations must necessarily carry much greater weight with the English nation and the English Parliament than the prayers of this particular province, or of that particular province. A remarkable unanimity of feeling has already been evoked throughout India, I mean upon the question of the admission of our countrymen into the ranks of the Covenanted Civil Service. All India is of one mind upon this great question. And I am sure that with reference to all other questions affecting national interests, there is a similar unanimity of feeling among the educated classes throughout India.

But, gentlemen, I am not content to allow this question—the desirability and importance of promoting a feeling of

sympathy and union between the different modern races and peoples—to rest upon mere intellectual considerations. I desire to place this question upon the exalted basis of the human emotions. Are not all Indians brothers, ought they not then to live and act as brothers? The ground which we tread is holy. Round us sleep our revered sires. Beware how we live in this land. Let us live in it as loving brothers. But if we cannot do so, then do thou, O God of nature! hurl against us the thunders of thy wrath, for by living we desecrate and pollute the memories of our sires.

The cause of Indian unity stands in need of missionaries. No cause has ever prospered which has not had its missionaries, its apostles and prophets. The cause of Italian unity had its apostles and prophets, its Garibaldis and its Mazzinis. Who will be the Garibaldi and Mazzini of Indian unity? Who amongst us will emulate their self-sacrifice, their matchless patriotism, their unflinching devotion to the interests of their country? Their revolutionary spirit is not indeed needed for the benefit of India. The march of progress which has already commenced under English auspices must not be disturbed. May England long continue to rule India for the glory of England and the benefit of India. But we want the inspiration to noble actions to be derived from the blessed names and sanctified examples of the immortal apostles of Italian unity. I repeat, who will be the apostles of Indian unity?

Young men, whom I see around me in such large numbers, you are the hopes of your families. May I not also say, you are the hopes of your country. Your country expects great things from you. Now I ask, how many of you are prepared, when you have finished your studies at the college, to devote your lives, to consecrate your energies to the good of your country? I repeat the question and I pause for a reply. (Here the speaker paused for a few seconds. Cries of "*all*

all" from all sides of the gallery). The response is in every way worthy of yourselves and of the education which you are receiving. May you prove true to your resolve, and carry out in life the high purposes which animate your bosoms.

Gentlemen, I have a strong conviction and an assured belief that there comes a time in the history of a nation's progress, when every man may verily be said to have a mission of his own to accomplish. Such a time has now arrived for India. The fiat has gone forth. The celestial mandate has been issued that every Indian must now do his duty, or stand condemned before God and man. There was such a time of stirring activity in the glorious annals of England, when Hampden offered up his life for the deliverance of his country, when Algernon Sydney laid down his head on the block to rid his country of a hated tyrant, when English bishops did not hesitate in the discharge of their duty to their Fatherland to descend from the performance of their ecclesiastical functions and appear as traitors before the bar of a Criminal Court. These are glorious reminiscences in England's immortal history, which Englishmen to this day look back upon with pride and satisfaction. It is not indeed necessary for us to have recourse to violence in order to obtain the redress of our grievances. Constitutional agitation will secure for us those rights the privileges which in less favoured countries are obtained by sterner means. But peaceful as are the means to be enforced, there is a stern duty to be performed by every Indian. And he who fails in that duty is a traitor before God and man.

In holding up for your acceptance the great principle of Indian unity, I do not lay any claims to originality. Three hundred years ago, in the Punjab, the immortal founder of Sikhism, the meek, the gentle, the blessed Nanak preached

the great doctrine of Indian unity and endeavoured to knit together Hindoos and Musulmans under the banner of a common faith. That attempt was eminently successful. Nanak became the spiritual founder of the Sikh Empire. He preached the great doctrine of peace and good will between Hindoos and Musulmans. And standing in the presence of his great example, we too must preach the great doctrine of peace and good will between Hindoos and Musulmans, Christians and Parsees, aye between all sections of the great Indian community. Let us raise aloft the banner of our country's progress. Let the word "Unity" be inscribed there in characters of glittering gold. We have had enough of past jealousies, part dissensions, past animosities. The spirits of the dead at Paniput will testify to our bloody strifes. The spirits of the dead in other battle-fields will testify to the same fact. There may be religious differances between us. There may be social differences between us. But there is a common platform where we may all meet, the platform of our country's welfare. There is a common cause which may blind us together, the cause of Indian progress. There is a common Divinity, to whom we may uplift our voices in adoration, the Divinity who presides over the destinies of our country. In the name then of a common country, let us all, Hindoos, Musulmans, Christians, Parsees, members of the great Indian community, throw the pall of oblivion over the jealousies and dissensions of by-gone times and, embracing one another in fraternal love and affection, live and work for the benefit of a beloved fatherland. Under English auspices there is indeed a great future for India. I am confident of the great destinies that are in store for us. You and I may not live to see that day. These eyes of ours may not witness that spectacle of ineffable beauty. It may not be permitted to us to exclaim Simeonlike, "Now Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in

peace." It may not be permitted to us to exclaim like the Welsh Bard on the heights of Snowdon, "Visions of glory, spare my aching sight." But is it nothing to know when you are dying, when you are about to take leave of this world, of its joys and sorrows, when the past of your life is unfurled before you, when eternity opens wide its portals, is it nothing to know at that last awful, supreme moment of your lives, that you have not lived in vain, that you have lived for the benefit of others, that you have lived to help in the cause of your country's regeneration? Let us all lead worthy, honourable and patriotic lives, that we may all live and die happily and that India may be great. This is my earnest and prayerful request. May it find a response in your sympathetic hearts.

THE
VERNACULAR PRESS ACT.

A public Meeting was held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on the 17th April 1878, to consider the desirability of petitioning Parliament, on the subject of the Vernacular Press Act. The Meeting was largely attended. There were upwards of 5000 men present. The first Resolution having been moved, seconded, and adopted, Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea on rising to move the Second Resolution spoke as follows :—

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to move the 2nd Resolution. The Resolution runs as follows :—

" That having regard to the devoted loyalty and attachment of the people of India to the British Crown, to which willing and ungrudging testimony has from time to time been borne by many high and distinguished authorities both here and in England, to the peace and contentment that reign throughout the country, this meeting desires to record its emphatic opinion that a repressive and retrograde measure like the Vernacular Press Act is unnecessary and uncalled for, and is opposed to the interests of justice as it altogether dispenses with the usual safeguards of judicial investigation, and substitutes in their place the discretionary authority of executive officers."

Gentlemen, the Resolution which I have just read speaks of the devoted loyalty and attachment of the people of this country to the British Crown. It is rather a matter of regret that at this time of day, after having lived for more than a century under the fostering influences of English rule and English civilization, the task should have devolved upon us to speak on the subject of our loyalty, and not only that, but that it should also be necessary that we should endeavour to establish our loyalty by unimpeachable facts and unassailable arguments. But the necessity clearly exists. The new Act is a direct slur upon our loyalty. Where would have been the necessity for such an Act in the midst of a contented, happy, and above all a loyal people? Therefore, I repeat, gentleman, the Act is a direct reproach, and a reflection upon our loyalty. The question, therefore, is, are we loyal, or are we not? Before I proceed to offer any observation on this most important subject, it becomes necessary that I should hasten to draw a distinction. Loyalty to the Crown is to be distinguished from subserviency, from obsequiousness, to this officer or that officer. We may criticise the measures of Government. We may criticise the acts of individual officers; but such criticisms are not incompatible with allegiance to British rule in this country. The question then is, are we loyal, or are we not? Are we wanting in loyalty, in dutiful homage, unswerving allegiance to the throne of her who rules over this country, whose matchless purity of character, whose generosity of disposition, whose keen and ardent interest in the welfare of her Indian subjects have created in our minds the highest respect for her person, and have planted deep her throne in the affection of the teeming millions of this country. Gentlemen, I put the question, are we wanting in loyalty to this great, wise, virtuous, beneficent ruler—our beloved Empress? Let us appeal to facts. If we are to be condemned, let it not be

upon vague generalities, upon more assumptions, upon futile theories. You are all, gentlemen, familiar with the well-known maxim of English law,—"The king can do no wrong." This is no more a cardinal maxim of English law than it represents a principle implanted deep in the inborn instinct of the Indian races and peoples. We are essentially a loyal people. By instinct, by tradition, by association, we are loyal. With us the King is a semi-divine personage. He is the embodiment of justice, purity and truth. Given to the performance of his pledges, he claims the unconditional homage of his subjects. And some of the greatest of our poets—those master delineators of the prevailing sentiments of the age in which they lived,—have clothed this feeling in suitable form and appropriate diction. Valmiki has taken advantage of this feeling in his immortal poem of the Ramayana. Witness the burst of grief that overpowers the good citizens of Ajodhya when their beloved heir-apparent Rama, accompanied by his devoted consort, leaves the home of his father to retire into the wilderness. Witness again the wailings, the lamentations, the dolorous cries of mourning that fill the air on the death of the aged monarch, Dasaratha. Witness the transport of joy, the manifestations of rejoicings, that fill all hearts, when Rama returns home to take possession of the throne of his fathers. I say, we are essentially a loyal people, and however much English education might have revolutionized our mental constitution, it has not abated by one atom that character for deep and intense loyalty which has marked the history of our race from the earliest times. Gentlemen, you have all read of the Pindari War, that war which England undertook in the first quarter of this century in the interests of civilization, to rid the country of those Pindari robbers the eternal enemies of progress and good government. When that great war was raging, when its flames had covered the

firmament with their lurid glare, there was not a house, there was not a domestic circle which did not offer up its prayers to the God of battles, invoking his blessings for the success of British arms. This fact appears from a petition which the Native community sent up to the Supreme Court in 1823. Our father prayed for the triumph of British arms, aye, the fathers of those who have met here to-night to vindicate their character for loyalty, and to hurl back with scorn and indignation the charge which is sought to be brought home to them—that they are disloyal and faithless to that Government under whose protecting shadows they have enjoyed the inestimable blessing of security of life and property, and have made such rapid strides in civilization and enlightenment. Great God! was it reserved to our lot that we should have to vindicate our character for loyalty, in the face of these instances of devoted allegiance to the British crown?

Passing over the Afghan War, we come to the dark days of the Indian Mutiny. It is essentially a military revolt, with which the people at large had no sympathy, and from which they sedulously kept themselves aloof. Not only did they not sympathise with that revolt, not only did they resist the temptation of joining their countrymen in arms against the British Government, but when the hour came, they manfully stood by their English rulers, and rendered them important services. How many daring feats of valour were performed by the native soldiery, in arms against their own countrymen and in support of British supremacy; how numerous, how manifold were the services, rendered by native gentlemen for the maintenance of the existing order of things? Doe Narain Sing does not live, but we invoke his shade to bear witness to his trials and sufferings, his gigantic exertions to crush out the seeds of rebellion and restore peace and order. But for the memorable services of that

great man, the last vestige of British power would, in the days of the Mutiny, have disappeared from the sacred and ancient city of the Hindoos. Those were days when loyalty displayed itself to the greatest advantage, and was appreciated most.

Now, gentlemen, let me draw your attention to a recent illustration of the same principle. Do the annals of a subject race present an instance of loyalty more cordial, genuine, earnest and enthusiastic than that with which the Prince of Wales was welcomed, when he did us the distinguished honour of visiting India? That manifestation of loyalty elicited from His Royal Highness the warmest expression of his heartfelt satisfaction and approbation. Is there a nobler instance of loyalty than that which was displayed on the occasion of the Delhi Assemblage? While Englishmen were wrangling about the propriety of calling their Queen Empress; while they were discussing, with no small amount of warmth and ardour, the constitutional question involved in this change of name, the people of India, from the Himalayas to the Comorin, from the Brahmaputra to the Indus, assembled by their tens of thousands in the capital cities of their provinces and districts to exchange congratulations and compliments, and to invoke the blessing of God on the new relationship which it had pleased Her Majesty to assume as regards her Indian subjects. These, gentlemen, are some instances of loyalty, which might be adduced in refutation of the charge which has been laid against us. But fortunately, loyal as we are, our loyalty has received recognition from persons of the highest position, not excluding Her Most Gracious Majesty the Empress herself. I, therefore, beg to be allowed to read extracts testifying to our loyalty in the most glowing terms. I shall begin with the testimony of Lord Canning. I hold in my hand a book which contains a letter written to the late Maharajah Shirish

Chunder Roy Bahadoor of Nuddea. The letter is dated 17th of December 1857. Thus writes the Home Secretary to the Maharajah :—

"The Governor-General in Council wishes you to rest assured that the Government of India will not forget, that England will not forget, that, if unhappily the mutineers and rebels of India are to be reckoned by thousands, the peaceful and loyal subjects of the Queen in India are numbered by millions."

This is the testimony of that kind and humane Governor-General whose sense of justice and fairness has made his name a household word with us.

The next will be an extract from a message which Her Imperial Majesty was pleased to send to the Viceroy on the 1st of January 1877 :—

"We have witnessed with heartfelt satisfaction the reception which they have accorded to our beloved son, and have been touched by the evidence of their loyalty and attachment to our House and Throne."

This then is the testimony of that gracious, wise and good sovereign who rules over us. Lord Lytton was pleased to speak in similar terms, when the deputation from the Native Press Association waited upon His Excellency, on the auspicious occasion of the Delhi Assemblage. I have not been able to lay my hand upon the extract, but I was one of those who composed the deputation, so I am able to speak to the testimony His Lordship was pleased to bear. I shall, in the next place, read an extract from the administration Report of Bengal for 1875-76.

This is what Sir Richard Temple says :—

"At heart and in the truest and best sense, the Bengalis are thoroughly loyal. In this respect there are not in all British India better subjects of the Crown. And, under all circumstances, adverse or propitious, they evince a steady,

industrious and law-abiding spirit which must command regard and esteem from every Englishman who knows them."

The remarks apply to Bengal alone, for Sir Richard was at the time Lieutenant-Governor of these Provinces. Gentlemen, if time allowed, I might produce such an array of extracts, testifying to our loyalty, as might detain you here all night.

We are then loyal, and ungrudging testimony to our loyalty has been borne by persons in the highest positions. But the Resolution also speaks of the peace and contentment that reign throughout the length and breadth of the country. There is peace; none can gainsay that. But perhaps it will not be so readily admitted, that there is contentment reigning throughout the country. Talk of contentment in the face of that rising at Surat; why, the people were in arms against the authorities only the other day, in one of the most important cities in the Western Presidency, and how could it then be maintained that the people are contented? I say, there is contentment as regards the *existence* of British rule in this country, though we may complain of the particular manner in which the administration is occasionally carried on. I do not believe that there is a single native of India who does not wish, from the bottom of his heart, that the English rule might continue long, for the benefit of India and the glory of England. We know full well the debt immense of endless gratitude we owe to England. We know full well the incalculable blessings which English rule has been the means of conferring upon the people of this country. The English rule in this country is essentially a progressive rule. The Government of to-day is not the Government of 25 years back. What were the dreams of our fathers are realities with us. What are our fondest hopes and aspirations will be cherished

privileges with those who come after us and live to enjoy the benefits of British rule. We are loyal, we are contented. Why then bursts upon our heads this bolt of thunder in a cloudless sky !

It has been remarked by the immortal founder of modern jurisprudence that every law is an evil. It is an infringement of the natural liberty of man, an encroachment upon his innate rights and privileges. It, therefore, becomes the bounden duty of those who introduce any measure of law, to justify it by facts and arguments. Much more is this duty incumbent on those who introduce a repressive measure of legislation, like the one under discussion. Therefore, we are driven to the conclusion, that it is for Government to prove that the Act is necessary, and not for us to show that the Act is unnecessary and uncalled for. It must also be said, in justice to the Government, that they have made out the strongest case possible under the circumstances, and have brought forward all the facts and arguments in support of their position. But what are they? Let us examine the facts. The justification of Government is contained in the speeches of Hon'ble Members, the statement of objects and reasons, and above all, in the translation of extracts from the vernacular journals. I hold these extracts in my hand. The main objects of the law, as stated in the first paragraph of the statement of objects and reasons, is to empower the Government to suppress seditious writings more effectually than is practicable under the present law. Sir Alexander Arbuthnot remarks that, within the last three or four years, there has been a steady increase in the number of seditious writings in the vernacular papers, and that the evil has become worse than ever within the last 12 months. Thus it has become necessary to pass a special-law on the subject. But the question at once occurs, is there not already a section in the Penal Code to repress sedition? Why, we all

remember that in the year 1870, when Sir Fitz-James Stephen was Law-member of the Supreme Council, a section was added to the Penal Code, defining disaffection and punishing sedition. But that law is pronounced to be inefficient. I ask, have you tried it? Have you experimented with it? Have there been prosecutions under it? Have editors of vernacular papers been charged under its special provisions? If not, what right have you to assume that the law is inefficient? And, if inefficient and unworkable, why not rather amend and improve it than introduce a new law? But, gentlemen, the Government has strong objections to prosecute editors of vernacular papers for sedition, under the Penal Code. It has, herefore, thought fit to introduce this special law. Its grounds are not many. The chief of them runs somewhat as follows:—The ordinary criminal law *punishes* an offender after the crime has been committed; the special law seeks to *prevent* the commission of an offence. The Government, wants to *prevent*, not to *punish*. Hence the special law. Gentlemen, I invite your attention to the terms of this argument, for upon this argument rests the entire superstructure of the Act. The ordinary criminal law *punishes*. This special law *prevents*. I must at once pause to point out the fallacy of this reasoning, which seeks to draw a distinction between the criminal law that *punishes* and the criminal law that *prevents*. Why does the criminal law *punish*? Is it not to *prevent* the commission of an offence? The end and aim of the ordinary criminal law, therefore, is to *prevent*. The end and aim of the special law is likewise to *prevent*. What need is there, then, for the special law? But the analogy does not stop here. The *modus operandi* is in both cases the same. The ordinary criminal law prevents by means of punishment. The special law prevents also by means of punishment. For that law

contemplates that the offending editor will be deterred from writing seditious articles through fear of forfeiting his bail bond, which amounts to a fine, and which is therefore a punishment. Hence it will appear that the end and aim of the ordinary criminal law is precisely the same as that of the special law, and the *modus operandi* is the same in both the cases. What necessity—what justification then is there, I ask, for this law?

There is another argument adduced in support of the measure. The government is anxious to prevent the dissemination of the poison of sedition. If prosecutions for sedition were instituted under the Penal Code, the poisonous matter complained of, would be quoted in the various papers, and *that* would help to disseminate the poison. But what, then, if the poison were allowed to disseminate? Why, the safety of the State, says Government, requires that the poison should not be allowed to spread. The supreme law of the safety of the State is invoked, and we are asked to fall down before this dread divinity and to hold our tongues in sullen silence. If the safety of the State required such a law, I am sure my countrymen would gladly vote in favour of it. But I ask, was there ever a time in which the question of the safety of the State was more narrowly and anxiously considered than in the dark days of the Indian Mutiny? In those dark days, when the country was in flames, when the British empire was tottering to its foundations, when the contagion of rebellion was spreading like wild-fire over an American prairie; in those dark, stern and awful days, Lord Canning and his Council thought nothing of disseminating the poison, but boldly came forward when it became necessary to prosecute certain vernacular editors who had been guilty of writing seditious libels. In 1857, the editor of the *Durbin*, the editor of the *Samachar Sudhabarsan*, the editor of the *Sultan-ul-Akhbar* were prosecuted by Lord Canning for

sedition. In those dark days of the mutiny, when the political system was most prone to succumb to the deadening effects of this poison, it had vitality enough to resist its baneful influences. And now we are told in times of comparative peace, contentment, and prosperity, and with a loyal and law-abiding people, that the gigantic fabric of British Empire,-this colossal and imperial structure, resting upon the willing allegiance, the steadfast loyalty and the fervent devotion of two hundred and fifty millions of human beings, stands in danger of being wrecked and ruined by the miserable pratings of a few vernacular editors, who might take it into their heads to indite articles, not the most temperate or the most respectful towards the Government.

But there is another argument which, in the opinion of Government, makes it necessary that the poison should not be allowed to disseminate. It is assumed that the readers of vernacular papers are ignorant and uncultivated men, upon whose minds the seditious criticisms of the vernacular papers would have a most fatal and prejudicial effect, and sap the foundations of their loyalty. A paternal Government must protect them, and hence the law. Now, I beg most distinctly to affirm that the readers of vernacular papers are not thoughtless, ignorant and uncultivated men. They are, for the most part, educated men. Primary education was introduced into our country only the other day, and we have not yet reached that state of blessedness, devoutly to be wished for, when the Bengal ploughman may be seen ploughing with the one hand, and holding the *Sulava Samachar* in the other. The vast masses of our people still continue in the grovelling depths of profound ignorance. They read no newspaper, vernacular or otherwise. It is educated people who read them: The *Hindu Patriot* confirms this view of the matter, and so does the *Indian Mirror*; and the *Sahachar*, whose mournful loss we

deplored the other day, in that farewell letter of his which we all read with such melancholy interest, distinctly stated that all its readers were educated men and did not come from the uncultivated classes. But there is a higher authority yet who supports this view of the matter. Sir Richard Temple says as follows in his Administration Report for 1874-75 (p. 481) :—"Generally speaking, it may be said that the vernacular press has little or no influence on the majority of the people, who are agriculturists and labourers. *They do not see newspapers and are not influenced bv them, either directly or indirectly*." The arguments then, upon which this measure of legislation is based, have fallen through, and the measure stands before us, in all its naked deformity, unjustified and unaccounted for.

But I contend that the law is unnecessary, and that the vernacular papers are not disloyal. A grave charge has been brought against the Vernacular Press, *viz*., that it is disloyal. This charge is broadly made. It runs through the speeches of the Hon'ble Members of Council. It has, therefore, become necessary that we should discuss this question at length. I must crave the indulgence of this meeting to be allowed to confine my observations to the extracts from the Bengali papers, because I have not yet had time to compare the Urdu extracts with their originals. It is not for one moment to be supposed, that I do not sympathize with the vernacular editors of Upper India in their sore distress and trial. My heart bleeds as much for them, aye, indeed much more profusely than it does for the editors of Bengal, for they are poor, helpless, and alone in their trial, with no influentially organized association, with no powerful representative body to help them in this awful crisis. But the great God who helps the distressed will help them too. The cause of justice is their cause ; the cause of truth is their cause, and that cause will, in the end, triumph. Let me, gentlemen, begin

with the remark that these extracts range over a period of twelve months, and are confined to the year 1877. There may be one or two extracts of December 1876, and one or two of January 1878, but, for all practical purposes, we may assume that the extracts are confined to the year 1877. The question at once occurs, what was the condition of the Bengali papers before 1877? Was their tone loyal or disloyal? Let us examine facts. Let me begin with the year 1874-75, when Sir Richard Temple was the Lieutenant-Governor of these provinces. Sir Richard Temple, in his Administration Report for 1874-75, remarks as follows with reference to the tone of the Bengali Press :—

"I have accordingly paid due attention to this subject, and my general conclusion is decidedly favourable in respect to the loyalty and good-will of the Bengali Press towards the British Crown and nation, and towards the British rule in the main." Later on, he says :—"The case on behalf of the British is put by the Bengali Press with a warmth and an impressiveness hardly ever surpassed, and seldom equalled by zealous advocates among ourselves."

In the following year, Sir Richard Temple sees no reason to change his opinion on the subject. In the administration Report for 1875-76, he says :—"The Vernacular Press maintains the same general tone as characterized it last year, and the Lieutenant-Governor sees no reason to modify the expression of opinion which was placed on record in the Administration Report for 1874-75."

Let us now come to the time when Sir George Campbell was Lieutenant-Governor. Now, in considering the opinion of that distinguished authority, we must bear in mind that he was violently abused by the Bengali Press—in short, he was the best abused man of his time. Now Sir George Campbell says, in his Administration Report for 1872-73, that the Bengali Press is not really bad at heart. Thus

then for the two or three years preceding the year 1877, the tone of the Vernacular Press of Bengal was not only not hostile and seditious, but was absolutely loyal to the Government. Has it then all on a sudden become seditious? There is a break in the chain of continued development. To-day the Vernacular Press is loyal and respectful to the Government. To-morrow's sun dawns upon it, and all on the sudden, down goes its character for loyalty, and it becomes seditious, disloyal, spreading the taint and pollution of treason throughout the length and breadth of the land, and it becomes necessary to produce a Gagging Act. This simple fact, this break in the chain of continuity, makes us hesitate to believe in the correctness of this charge of sedition against the Vernacular Press, and, as we wade through the extracts, we find this suspicion all the more strongly confirmed. From the last Administration Report, we learn, that there are thirty-five vernacular papers in Bengal; the so-called seditious extracts have been made from fifteen papers. I say "so called" advisedly, because the extracts are not really seditious. Out of the fifteen papers from which extracts have been made, one, the *Samaj Darpan,* has ceased to exist for the last six or seven months. The gentleman who edited this paper received a notice from the Commissioner of Police, the other day, to enter into a bailbond for the good behaviour of his paper. Poor unfortunate editor! Little did he know that the obloquy of having once edited a vernacular paper would stick to him through life, and that months after he had quietly buried his journal in its grave, its spectral form would once again rise and haunt him like the ghastly phantom of another world. There are fourteen papers then from which thirty-two extracts have been made, excluding four from the *Samaj Darpan.* Now, I contend, that several of these translations are misleading. I shall only instance three. I shall begin

with an extract from the *Sadharani* of the 4th of March 1877, which speaks of the Fennua trial:—"It neither bespeaks," says the extract, "a cultivated taste, nor is it agreeable, to have constantly to write against Government. But in view of the arbitrary acts which have become common in these days, we should be wanting in our duty if we passed them over without any protest. The people were hitherto proud of the justice administered in the High Court. In seeking to shield a rash, oppressive, and unprincipled European Civilian, Government has now brought that Court into contempt, and has struck a blow at the root of British justice. Government has thus worked its own ruin; and if after this the people are found to express discontent, the Anglo-Indian editors will brand the Bengalis with such epithets as ungrateful, disloyal, scurrilous, and what not.' The translator has done injustice to the editor by omitting a passage which occurs in the same article, and the effect of which is to mollify the sense of the whole. The passage translated runs as follows:—

"But it will not do for us to remain quiet any longer: there is no justice in the country; *now for sometime we must create an agitation on this subject in the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland*."

Could there be anything more loyal, anything showing greater confidence in the integrity, and honesty of purpose of the British nation and the British Legislature than the extract which I have just quoted. Justice may not be obtained in this country, but England will do us justice, so says the extract.

The next quotation will be from the *Shoma Prokash* of the 26th of February 1877. I may here add that I quote extracts from those papers only which have the greatest influence and circulation:—

"The assertion so frequently made by our rulers that they never act contrary to law is seen to be utterly groundless, when we contemplate the illegal acts of Mr. Kirkwood, and the arbitrary treatment which Baboo Lal Chand experienced at his hands. We are at such moments led to question the use of the Legislative Councils, the maintenance of which costs so much to India, and the equally expensive offices of Viceroy and Lieutenant-Governor. For what is the use of them when the officers in the Mofussil are all in all? They are the Viceroy and the Lieutenant-Governor; they are the Legislative Councils; their orders are law, and their acts furnish the rules, and their will is Government. Natives are wrong in regarding indigo planters as oppressors. These oppressors cannot compare with Kirkwood and his *confreres*. If oppressions are necessary to the promotion of self-interest, the planters pledge themselves to resort to this means. Kirkwood and his brother officials (who ought to be officials of the same type) do the same, though they are sworn to put a stop to oppression." Here is also an important omission, for in the very same article there are lines which translated run thus:—"Now we are eager to hear the opinion of the Governor-General on this subject. His sense of justice has been clearly shown by his impartial minute on the Fuller case." Now, I ask, could anything show greater confidence in the impartiality and sense of justice of the present Viceroy.

The third and the last extract will be from the *Shahachar*. I can scarcely conceal the feelings of indignation that rise in my bosom, when I come to speak of the manner in which the extract has been made up. The extract is not the translation of any connected paragraph or article, but is made up of lines apparently taken at random. The *Shahachar* of the 2nd July writes the following in the course of an editorial, headed the Strength and Duty of England. "There are

many points of resemblance noticeable between England and Carthage of the ancient times. In wealth, naval and commercial supremacy, and in military skill, both are alike. Carthage fell, and the causes which brought about her fall are in full operation in England at the present day. The fall of Carthage was due to her fighting with mercenary troops and the existence of fierce factions among the leaders of her people. Does not England present the same spectacle to-day? She is like Carthage, the home of liberty, and, like her, she is an eyesore to all despotic Governments. The supremacy of England in naval warfare is, however, now a matter of question, while it is almost certain that on land she is no match for the army of any of the great Powers of Europe. The present is a critical time for her, possessed as she is of influence, but without adequate resources of war." Now there is a most important omission in connection with this extract. There occurs in this very article, a passage full of the most devoted loyalty and of good feeling to the English nation and the English Government, and which, curiously enough, does not appear in the translated extract. The passage runs as following :—

"It is not because we are the subjects of England that we desire to see her great and powerful. Read the annals of the human race. *No age, no country, has ever witnessed any system of administration or government like that of the British. The downfall of the British Empire will be the precursor of many evils to the human race.*" Before I take leave of the *Sahachar* I may point out to the meeting a passage full of loyalty which occurs in another article, which is in the same issue, from which the condemned extract has been made. The passage runs as follows :—

"We are the grateful subjects of Her Imperial Majesty. It is our incessant prayer that Her rule should be preserved intact."

It is upon extracts such as I have read to you that the Act is founded, and it is for you to consider whether an Act which rests upon extracts of this nature is justifiable or not. I may say that not one of the extracts made from the Bengali papers is seditious. Let me read an extract from the *Bharot Sanskarak* of 3rd September 1877 :—

" The *Bharat Sanskarak* observes with regret," says the extract, " Government has only two means, both imperfect and incorrect, of judging the tone of the native newspapers. These are—(1) the weekly report which is often a mistranslation of the views of native editors ; and (2) the representations made to Government by men like Kirkwood, which cannot but be of a hostile character. Under these circumstances it has become a matter of consideration with Native editors how to keep the Government informed of the true views maintained on public questions by the vernacular newspapers. The Native Press Association should now be up and doing."

Now I ask, could anything be more loyal, temperate and respectful to the Government than what is stated in the above extract ? The Advocate-General has taken the trouble of classifying the heads under which the several extracts may be placed. It would be interesting to know under which of those heads the extract I have quoted would come. The Vernacular Press is therefore not seditious. The Act, therefore, is entirely unjustifiable. It has been remarked by Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, in the course of his speech, that Sir Thomas Munro was against a free Press. Sir Alexander quotes Munro's minute dated 1822, but he says that he does not rely upon it. It is as well that Sir Alexander does not rely upon this minute. Sir Thomas Munro is opposed to a free Press, on what ground ? Because he thought that the writings of a Free Native Press would have a most prejudicial effect on the minds of the Indian soldiery. It is not

even pretended that the articles of the Vernacular Press are helping to create disaffection in the minds of the native soldiery. I, therefore, say that it is well that Sir Alexander does not rely on Sir Thomas Munro's minute. But Sir Alexander has likewise cited the authority of Metcalfe and Macaulay, in support of the new Gagging Act. I am bound to remark that the honourable member has not done justice to Sir Charles Metcalfe. Sir Charles, no doubt, contemplated the possibility of circumstances arising, which might make it necessary to impose restrictions upon the liberty of the Press. But he thought that *temporary or local restraints* would be sufficient to meet any case of emergency. Lord Canning and his Council understood Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute in this sense, as may be gathered from their Despatch to the Court of Directors, on the subject of the Gagging Act of 1857. Metcalfe said, in reply to the address presented to him by the people of Calcutta :—"I entirely concur with you in the desire which you entertain that if, at any time, actual danger should render necessary, *temporary or local restraints* on the liberty of the Press, the precautions applied by the Legislature may be only commensurate to the real exigency, and that no restrictions may be made permanent beyond those which are necessary to ensure responsibility ; and I trust that all legislation, with a view to protect the community against licentiousness, will be in the true spirit of liberty."

While speaking on this subject, I cannot help remarking upon the manner in which the Act is being worked. When the Bill became law, everybody thought it would be kept suspended like the sword of Damocles over the devoted heads of the Vernacular editors. But, at last, these hopes have been blasted. Already several editors of vernacular papers have been called upon to furnish security. Such demand has been made from the *Bharat Mihir* of Mymen-

singh, from the *Dacca Prokash* and *Hindoo Hitoysini* of Dacca, from the *Sulava Samachar* and the *Shahachar* of this city. And I ask, what offence have these papers been guilty of since the passing of the Act? We know of no offence which they have committed. Is the law then to have a retrospective effect? This call for security has told with fatal effect upon one at least of these papers. The *Shahachar* has ceased to exist. And I have no doubt a similar fate will soon overtake many other vernacular papers. Gentlemen, there has been some irregularity in the practical working of the Act. Section 3 requires that it is the Magistrate who must take the initiative in calling upon editors to furnish security. But in the case of at least three papers, it is the Lieutenant-Governor who has taken the initiative, and has called upon the Magistrate through the Commissioner of the Division, to require the editors to enter into their bail-bonds.

It is melancholy to contrast the manner in which the Gagging Act of 1857 was enforced, with the manner in which the present Vernacular Press Act is being worked. The Gagging Act of 1857 was a much milder piece of legislation than the Press Act of 1878. Mild as it was, it was worked with far greater moderation and forbearance. Let me illustrate this by an instance. On the 23rd of June 1857 the *Friend of India* published an article, headed the Centenary of Plassey. The Governor-General was of opinion that it contained objectionable remarks. A warning was sent round to the editor. He took no notice of the warning. He published an article in the next issue of his paper, in much more violent language, in reckless defiance of the warning that had been sent. But even then the forbearing Governor-General, whose memory we all cherish with so much respect, did not withdraw his license, but on receiving an assurance from the proprietor of the *Friend of India*, that such

objectionable matter would not be allowed to appear in its future issues, forgave the peccant journalist, and allowed the license to continue. A similar act of forbearance was shown as regards a letter which appeared in the *Bengal Hurkara* of the 13th September 1857, and this forbearance was shown at a time when it was a matter of question whether stern severity should not take the place of mercy and moderation.

It has been remarked, that the fact of the English Press having supported the Act ought to silence all criticism. I yield to none in my appreciation of the character for moderation, wisdom, and fairness which so eminently distinguishes the Press of England. The English Press, however, has decided the question *ex parte*, has not heard both sides of the case, and has certainly not heard the case for the defence. The English Press has likewise countenanced the Act, under a sense of imperious necessity. They are under the impression that the country is ripe for revolt, and that the seditious writings of the vernacular journals constitute a source of danger to the empire. But yet we are not without hopes of being able to appeal with success to the generous instincts of the English people. Our hopes and our confidence have been strengthened by what has already taken place in the House of Commons. Before a breath of complaint was heard here, before a word of protest was publicly raised in this country, those ardent advocates of human freedom and of liberty of speech, had already called in question, in the House of Commons, the wisdom, the policy and the justice of this most objectionable law. The question is, indeed, not an Indian question. It is essentially an English question. The question is not whether a certain number of Indians should have the right of free speech. The question is broader, vaster, deeper far. The question is whether in any part of the British dominions, whether in any part of the world

where floats the free flag of England—the flag which has "braved the battle and the breeze," the flag which has stood forth in all ages and in all climes as the beacon of human freedom and human progress—the question is whether in any part of the world acknowledging British rule, restrictions should be imposed upon the liberty of speech of any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. We claim this privilege not as a matter of favour. We are no longer the conquered subjects of England. We are the incorporated citizens of a free empire. Has not our Sovereign been graciously pleased to assume the title of Empress? And was not the act of assumption celebrated amid circumstances of pomp and splendour, which have left a deep and ineffaceable impression upon the minds of the Indian races and peoples? Was that act of assumption, of sacred incorporation, a fact or a myth? I appeal to the princes, the chiefs, and the people of India—to the high officials who were present on that occasion—to bear witness to the solemnity of that ceremony and the sanctity of the pledges that were then given. We are British subjects, and are we to be deprived of an inalienable right of British subjects, in this summary and perfunctory manner? The Act is against the instincts of Englishmen, is against the genius of the British Constitution. The history of England is the history of freedom. It is the history of one long, continued, sustained effort to succour the distressed and to uphold the cause of oppressed nationalities. I cannot, for one moment, induce myself to believe that a nation so firmly wedded to the principles of justice and freedom, will sanction a measure which deprives a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects of an important privilege and an inestimable boon, which Englishmen prize above all things. It is England that has introduced into our midst the lamp of knowledge. Will she now put out that lamp with her own hands, and plunge us again into the depths of Cimmerian darkness? Under

English influence, India was waked to life. Under English auspices, the pulse of life is beating fast within her. But the present Act has prostrated, paralyzed, and overpowered her. Let us then appeal to the representatives of England, the custodians of her honour, the repositories of her name and fame, to repeal this objectionable law, to avert a great calamity from our country, and thus perform an act of duty which would redound to the glory of England and enhance that love, that respect, that veneration, which we all feel for the fair fame of England and her spotless name.

THE

VERNACULAR PRESS ACT.

SECOND MEETING.

A Public Meeting was held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on the 6th September 1878, to thank Mr. Gladstone and those members of Parliament who had condemned the Vernacular Press Act, and to take steps for the formation of a committee in the interests of the Vernacular Press. The Rev. K. M. Banerjea, L. L. D. was voted to the chair. The Rev. K. S. Macdonald, Principal, Free Church College, moved the first Resolution which ran as follows :—

"That this Meeting considers the late debate in the House of Commons on the Vernacular Press Act, as an auspicious event for the cause of good government in India, which, together with the righteous and unbiassed tone of the English press on the subject, shews that the leaders of the English nation have no sympathy with the arbitrary, intolerent, and repressive policy of that measure, that they recognize the claims of the people of this country to the rights of British citizenship, and acknowledge the necessity of governing India according to the liberal principles of English rule, and the responsibility of Parliament to secure the practical application of those principles ; and as this happy result has, in no small degree, been due to the advocacy of the claims of the Vernacular Press by the Right Hon'ble W. E. GLAD-

STONE, this Meeting desires to convey to that illustrious Statesman its humble but heartfelt acknowledgments and its deep sense of gratitude, for so nobly vindicating, on behalf of the unrepresented millions of India, the cause of free speech and good government in India, which has been seriously threatened by the enactment of the Vernacular Press Law."

In rising to second this Resolution Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea spoke as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I have been requested to second the Resolution which has just been so ably moved. I do so with some amount of reluctance and hesitation. I should have preferred, if the task had devolved upon some body else. I should have preferred that, for reasons which it is not necessary for me to state here. Gentlemen, we have met here in order to record the expression of our deep and heartfelt gratitude to those Hon'ble Members of Parliament, who, in the British House of Commons, advocated the interests and the claims of the Vernacular Press of India. But before we look so far abroad, I think we might as well look nearer home ; and if we do so, we shall find one in this very place, one in this very hall, one on this very platform, one not very far from me, one whose words of eloquence and wisdom we have just listened to, who, by his friendly sympathy and active co-operation with us in this great movement, has earned his claims to the gratitude of the people of this country. Gentlemen, I think I speak the unanimous sense of this meeting when I say, that the Rev. Mr. K. S. Macdonald is entitled to our deepest gratitude, and has deserved well of our countrymen. The career of Mr. Macdonald in India (I trust my worthy friend will allow me to refer to that career for one moment), has not indeed been

so demonstrative or so obtrusive as have been the careers of several who have preceded him, or of several who have worked with him, but his quiet, Christian life, his unassuming modesty, his deep and fervent sympathy with those, in whose midst Providence has called him to his work, have endeared him to all of us, and point to the conclusion, that the great race of Indian missionaries have not altogether disappeared from the face of the land, but that they have left behind them representatives, worthy to tread in their footsteps, to emulate their deeds, and to wear the mantles that have fallen from them.

Gentlemen, it will be in your recollection, that about four or five months ago, soon after the enactment of the Vernacular Press Law, we met here to discuss the merits of that law. Then there were gathered together in this very hall, thousands of my countrymen, all oppressed with grief at the thought that a Government to which we were indebted for so many blessings should have committed such a grievous mistake, yet determined to fight, within the limits of the constitution, for a privilege which English education and English influences had taught them to prize above all things. We had not, at that time, yet recovered from the first shock—from the first thrill of consternation—which the enactment of the Vernacular Press Law had sent through the loyal hearts of the people of this country. There was darkness on every face—despair was painted on every countenance. People asked one another in bewilderment and astonishment,—"Has it come to this? Has our Government so far forgotten the sacred and liberal principles of English rule, the immortal traditions of freedom ingrained in the constitution of every Englishman, as to enact a law which no Englishman could countenance, unless and until he had ceased to be an Englishman." Gentlemen, at that time, there were those who advised us not to hold the

meeting at all. There were those who declared that it would be disloyal—it would savour of disaffection towards the Queen, of disregard towards the constituted authorities of the land—if, at that time, when the relations between England and Russia were so critical, as were about to hurry those two great powers into the throes of a deadly and sanguinary conflict, we proceeded to convene a meeting to protest against the Vernacular Press Act. There were again others who declared that it was useless to protest against an Act, regarding which the Secretary of State had already telegraphed his sanction. We now know—that Blue Book lying on that chair will tell you—how that sanction was obtained. I would fain draw the veil of oblivion over this portion of the history of the Vernacular Press Act. "Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the Philistines should rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised should triumph." In spite, however, of these difficulties and doubts (and I am bound to admit, that we appreciated the full force of many of these difficulties and doubts), we felt that as loyal subjects of her Majesty the Queen, as educated men, nurtured in the traditions of freedom, who, while rejoicing in the blessings of British rule, had a great and an obvious duty to perform towards their countrymen ;—we felt that as loyal subjects of the Crown and as educated men, we could not allow an Act of this kind to pass unchallenged, and without a word of protest, that we could not allow the fair fame of British administration to be tarnished and sullied by a law of this description. Well, gentlemen, we met in spite of these difficulties and doubts. Certain resolutions were adopted at that large meeting. A committee was appointed, a petition was drafted and forwarded to Mr. Gladstone, who kindly presented it in due course to the House of Commons. A debate took place on that petition. Mr. Gladstone introduced his Resolu-

tion, requiring the Government to report to Parliament eve case in which action should be taken under the Vernacu Press Act, in a speech of studied moderation and surpassi eloquence. His motion was rejected by a majority of votes, or more properly speaking, of only 38 votes. The Resolution speaks truly, when it says that the debate which our petition evoked in the House of Commons, is an auspicious event, full of hope and promise, for the future good government of India. Never within my recollection, never within the recollection of the oldest amongst us here, not even within the recollection of our venerable Chairman, I venture to think, was an Indian question discussed, in so full a house. Not within my recollection, did the present Tory Government ever obtain so insignificant a majority, on a question of such grave importance. The Resolution further says, that the debate shews that the great leaders of the English nation,—those illustrious statesmen who shape the destinies and guide the public sentiment of the English people,—have no sympathy with the principles and the policy of the Vernacular Press Act, that they acknowledge that we are entitled to the rights and privileges of British citizenship ; they hold that India is to be governed according to the sacred and liberal principles of English rule, and they look to Parliament for the enforcement of this salutary principle. The Resolution, gentlemen, I repeat, speaks truly when it says that the debate is an auspicious event for the future good government of India. For never on so memorable an occasion, was the potent influence of English ideas exerted on a question of purely Indian interest. Would to God that this influence were exerted more energetically, more persistently, more continuously, and more methodically! We do really think, that if English opinion made itself felt with greater energy and vigour upon questions of Indian policy, a great change for the better would take place in the

government of this country. We highly appreciate the influence of English opinion upon Indian questions. But there is, unfortunately, a great apathy on the part of English statesmen, with regard to Indian matters. It is not for me to inquire into the cause of this apathy and indifference. I simply mention the fact to the meeting. But I am not going to exculpate Englishmen for their indifference with regard to Indian matters. You have all heard the story of the woman and of Mahmoud, the Ghuznevite conqueror. There lived in a remote province of Mahmoud's extensive dominions, a woman who had descended far into the vale of life. The province where she lived was not remarkable for the vigour and energy of its administration. One evening, she witnessed her house burnt down, her children massacred, and her goods plundered, by a body of robbers. But she was a woman whose mind was cast in a mould of more than ordinary vigour and sternness. She was determined to obtain her redress. Straightway she sought the royal capital. Arrived at Ghuznee, she prayed for an audience. The audience was granted ; Mahmoud received her. She then unfolded her sad tale of sorrow and of grief—of her massacred children, her plundered goods, her burnt-down house, of the agonies she had endured, of the feeling of despair that had crawled through her bones. The relentless monarch heard her tale of sorrow, with imperturbable calmness and indifference. A man of blood, given to slaughter, sporting in carnage and in plunder, it was not to be expected that a tale of this kind would very much move or affect him. " Woman," Mahmoud dryly remarked, " you live in a remote province of my Empire, and you cannot expect me to maintain order there, or to extend to it the protection of my laws." The woman calmly replied " Sire, why then do you conquer countries, to whose concerns you cannot pay sufficient attention, and for which you cannot hold yourself

answerable in the day of judgment ?" Gentlemen, it is not for me to reply to Englishmen and English statesmen in the language of this woman. It is not for me to say (deeply sensible as I am of the blessings of British rule) that Englishmen had no business to conquer and govern India, if they could not pay sufficient attention to its important interests. It is not for me to say, that the responsibilities of England are not ended by her appointing a body of administrators to govern this country, and then leaving them to the discretion of their own wills. This is a matter which it is for Englishmen and English statesmen to decide. But, gentlemen, we ourselves are not wholly free from blame for this apathy on the part of Englishmen with reference to Indian matters. I am afraid, we have never approached the consideration of this matter, with that seriousness, that conscientiousness, that sense of responsibility, which the gravity of the question calls for and requires at our hands. Sometimes we think of setting up a paper in London, which should be wholly and exclusively devoted to the consideration of Indian questions and interests. Sometimes we think of sending deputations to England on different questions, and in this way of creating a kind of general interest in Indian matters. But up to this time, we have absolutely done nothing. Our energies have been confined to mere vociferation and talk. I trust the day is not distant, when this apathy will give place to warm and active interest in devising means to educate English opinion on Indian questions, a change with which, I conceive, are identified the best interests of the millions of this country.

But, gentlemen, it might be asked, why is it that we so highly value and so greatly prize the influence of English opinion upon Indian questions ; why is it, that we are so anxious to secure the play of English opinion on Indian matters ? The answer is plain. The political atmosphere

of England is so very different from, and is so superior to, the political atmosphere of this country. I say this not by way of complaint, but I simply state a fact. England is a free country. She rejoices in the blessings of free institutions. India, on the other hand, is a despotic country. Her Government is despotic ; her administration is despotic ; her traditions are despotic ; her history is but the history of a despotic country. And never was the superiority of free institutions over despotic institutions more strikingly illustrated, than in the case of the controversy regarding the Vernacular Press Act. Gentlemen, those of you who read the newspapers, must know that some of the most influential exponents of Anglo-Indian opinion have upheld the principles of the Vernacular Press Act. But I believe, that without a single exception, the leading organs of English opinion have condemned the policy of the Vernacular Press Act. Then again the officials in India, as a class, approved the Act, seemed to congratulate one another on having hit upon the happy expedient, to get rid of a troublesome nuisance, by gagging the Vernacular Press. I know there has been an honorable exception ; but that exception only proves my contention. But let us observe for one moment the attitude of some Indian officials in England. There, in the dark chambers of the India Council,—I say dark, because the deliberations of that Council seldom see the light—there were statesmen, combining vast knowledge with vast experience, men who held high and exalted positions in India—one a late Lieutenant-Governor, the second a late Chief Justice, the third a Resident at Hyderabad—who all condemned the Act in unmeasured terms, refuted the arguments adduced in support of it, with a power of earnestness and eloquence, with a precision of thought and language, which, while they do immense credit to their sagacity and statesmanship, have enhanced greatly the respect which we

all feel for them. Here, again, in the Legislative Council of India, members vied with one another, in supporting the principles of the Act. There was not a single dissentient voice raised against it. But in England, and, in that most august assembly in the world, where are gathered together the representatives of the most illustrious statesmen that have adorned the pages of history—the representatives of Pitt, Burke, Sheridan, and Chatham—there were so many as 152 members and more, who reprobated and condemned, in one way or other, the provisions of this gagging Act. Gentlemen, there is one fact, connected with this debate, which, to my mind, seems to possess peculiar interest. The political atmosphere of England seems to have had a salutary effect even upon the mind of an Indian Governor. Sir George Campbell declared, from his place in the House of Commons, that he was a waverer, that he was inclining from the school of repression towards the school of freedom, that, in short, he was in favour of the adoption of liberal principles in the administration of the Indian empire. I wish to speak of Sir George Campbell with the utmost possible respect. He was our late Lieutenant-Governor, and as such, had earned his title to our gratitude, by the impetus he gave to the cause of mass education. But it did not strike us while he was here, that he was particularly in favour of advanced views or liberal principles. Those of you who have read the Blue Book, will bear in mind that it was Sir George Campbell, who first set that machinery in motion which has produced the Vernacular Press Act; for it was he, who in August 1873, first called the attention of the Government of India to the supposed excesses of the Vernacular Press. But his ideas have now apparently changed, under the influence of a healthier political atmosphere. Such, indeed, gentlemen, is the wholesome influence of English ideas and views upon the mind of even a trained despot. But the healthy influence

of English ideas is still more manifest in the recorded opinions of those high officials in India, who opposed the enactment of the Vernacular Press Law. It will be found, in glancing through the pages of the Blue Book, that the English officials in India, who condemned the Vernacular Press Act, had been all brought up in the free political atmosphere of England, and were imbued with that spirit of liberality, which is begotten of free institutions. Who was it that liberated the English and Native Press of India? It was an English lawyer, the great Lord Macaulay. Who was it again that protested, in language of surpassing earnestness and vigour, the attempt to gag the Native Press of India? It was again an English lawyer, Sir Arthur Hobhouse. Who was it, I ask, among Provincial Governors, that raised his voice of warning and protest against this Act? It was the Duke of Buckingham, the descendant of an illustrious line of English nobles—a statesman thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the free institutions of his country, and one who had sat as a Cabinet Minister with honor and credit to himself. Gentlemen, it is, I believe, not the etiquette to thank, in public meetings officials who may have rendered great service in the performance of their public duties; but I think, we should not be doing justice to our own feelings, if we did not take advantage of this public meeting, to express, in the most emphatic manner, our deep gratitude to his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and his Council, to Sir Arthur Hobhouse, to Sir Erskine Perry, Sir William Muir, and Colonel Yule, for the worthy and honorable stand they made against the Vernacular Press Act, and for so nobly vindicating, in the eyes of the millions of this country, the reputation of the British Government for liberality and enlightenment.

Gentlemen, up to this time, our attention has been confined to the consideration of the importance of English views

influencing Indian questions. I think it is as well, that we should now consider, in what respect English opinion condemned the Vernacular Press Act: and when we have enquired into this matter, it will be found greatly to our satisfaction, that there is a marked similarity between the expression of Native sentiment and of English sentiment, in this respect. There seems to be a remarkable harmony of opinion between our fellow-subjects in England and ourselves, with reference to the Vernacular Press Act. English opinion regards the Vernacular Press Act as unjustifiable, as no sufficient cause has been shewn, to use Mr. Gladstone's own words, "for the taking of fresh powers." Now, this was precisely what we had urged. We said, that the Government was not at liberty to assume that the provisions of the Penal Code were insufficient or had failed, when not a single complaint, not a single prosecution, not a single trial had been instituted or held under those provisions. The plea of urgency was adduced in justification of the precipitancy, with which the measure was carried through the Supreme Council. It was also urged, in defence of the measure, that it was necessary in the interests of the safety of the State. English opinion regarded these pleas as utterly absurd and ridiculous. Englishmen pooh-poohed them altogether, and you will remember that our view of the matter was pretty much the same.

A great deal has been said about the so-called seditious character of the Vernacular Press. A great many extracts have been made—a hundred and fifty, they say. These were paraded about. Classifications were made. A very learned classification was made by a learned gentleman. That classification was unfortunately too logical to be correct. It was supposed that with the aid of this classification, and by this pompous parade of extracts, it would be conclusively proved that the tone of the Vernacular Press was seditious,

and that that Press was silently, but steadily, undermining the affections, the loyalty, and the gratitude of the teeming millions of this country, towards the British nation and the British Government. This was the grand result which was sought to be achieved, by the parade of the extracts in question. But, then, gentlemen, what was the verdict of sober English opinion on this matter? I must here remark, that John Bull is not to be carried away by mere empty rhetoric, or by any unmeaning bluster. He may be an orator or he may be a poet, nevertheless, he is gifted with a great deal of common sense and practical sagacity. Well, the extracts are before John Bull. He takes up his spectacles, and goes through them, with eager interest and attention. When he has read through a good many of them, a quiet laugh escapes his lips. He wonders how his countrymen, in another hemisphere, could have made so much fuss about them. He thinks that a great many of these extracts are simple trash, or perhaps, "double distilled trash," as Mr. Gladstone very forcibly put it and that a good many of them contain matter which is very valuable, and which, it is essential, that the foreign rulers of India should know. Now, gentlemen, you will bear in mind, that we protested, in the most emphatic language, against the imputation that was sought to be cast on the Vernacular Press, that it was disaffected, and that it was slowly spreading the taint and pollution of sedition, throughout the length and breadth of this country. Here and there, no doubt, there might be foolish and imprudent utterances, but we felt, that on the whole, the Vernacular Press of India was loyal, and was deeply convinced of the advantages and blessings of English rule. Here then was a remarkable unanimity between English and Native opinion on a matter, regarding which such unanimity, was, perhaps, least to be expected. I am afraid, gentlemen, I have been trying your

patience too much, but I beg you will bear with me for a few minutes more, as my remarks have reference to a matter of the deepest importance, *viz.*, the most striking harmony there is, between Native feeling and the expression of genuine English sentiment, on the subject of the Vernacular Press Act.

There is in this law a most objectionable distinction made between the English and the Vernacular Press. Gentlemen, I happen to know something of Englishmen. I have had ample opportunities of mixing very familiarly with them, and I may say, without fear of contradiction, that if there is one thing more than another which is repugnant to an Englishman, which he hates, abhors, abominates, and detests from the very bottom of his heart, it is the existence of any supposed trait of inequality in any law, framed by Englishmen, and administered by English judges. That there should be one law for the white and another for the black man, one for the rich and another for the poor, one for the high and another for the low, one for English journalists and another for Vernacular journalists, is a thing which no Englishman can endure or tolerate, unless he has ceased to be an Englishman. It was, therefore, only to be expected that Englishmen should regard with intense dissatisfaction this novel feature in the law. In the eye of the English law, every subject enjoys equal rights and privileges ; and how could those trained in the traditions of that law, regard with anything but feelings of deep disapprobation, an enactment which set at defiance this fundamental maxim of English jurisprudence. Now we too complained of this distinction between English and Vernacular journals, but, perhaps, not with that degree of emphasis and force, which the importance of the subject demanded, for we were anxious not to be misapprehended—we were anxious to steer clear of the shoals and quicksands of race antagonism, upon which the

prospects of the cause we had taken up, might, otherwise, have been wrecked. But, Gentlemen, the point against which English sentiment directed its principal attack, was the withdrawal of the right of judicial trial from offending Vernacular editors. It is the inalienable privilege of every British subject,—no matter, in what portion of Her Majesty's dominions he may have been born,—it is his indefeasible claim of which he cannot be deprived by any legislative enactment, except by the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*, on an occasion of extreme peril—that he cannot be punished without a trial, held according to the law of the land and by a body of his peers. It is against this sacred privilege of a British subject, that the Vernacular Press Act has ventured to raise violent hands. It was not then to be wondered at, that speaker after speaker in the House of Commons rose to condemn this objectionable feature in the law. There was a most marked unanimity of sentiment in the House, with regard to this peculiarity of the law. It has been remarked, gentlemen, that the Vernacular Press Act follows the lines of the Irish Peace Preservation Act. But there is a remarkable difference, and that difference is very much to the prejudice of the Vernacular Press law. The Irish Peace Preservation Act allowed the injured editor to bring an action against Government for damages in a Civil Court, in which the whole issue between him and the Government would be tried according to the forms of judicial investigation. No doubt, this was very unsatisfactory, as it amounted to a trial after punishment ; but even this redeeming feature has quietly been done away with in the Vernacular Press law. Thus it will be seen, that English and Native opinion are agreed first, in regarding the Act as unjustifiable, secondly in reprobating the distinction sought to be drawn between the English and the Vernacular Press, and lastly, in strongly condemning the withdrawal of the

right of judicial trial from offending Vernacular editors. In the House of Commons, not the faintest attempt was made to defend the Act. There was the absence of all reality about the debate, as the *Spectator* newspaper has truly remarked. Member after member rose to speak, but the sense of the House was agreed in condemning the Act.

Now comes the most important question of all. Who was it that created this feeling, evoked this interest in the British House of Commons, roused the sleeping lion from his slumbers, and directed him to cast his eyes upon the concerns of England's great Empire in the East ? It was that illustrious orator, that philanthropic statesman, that friend of humanity, that advocate of the rights of oppressed nationalities, whose mission in life it is to live for and serve others, and to extend to the utmost bounds of the habitable globe the blessings of peace, contentment, happiness, freedom, progress and good government, founded upon the hopes, wants and aspirations of the people. Gentlemen, if the Irish were to be reconciled, if the wounds of centuries were to be healed, if justice were to be done to Erin, if the badge of foreign domination must be swept away from her soil, if Irish agrarian outrages were to cease, it was because the Right Hon'ble W. E. Gladstone stood forth, at the head of his Liberal party, to uphold the interests of Ireland, and to vindicate the reputation of his own country for liberal and progressive government, in the eyes of civilized Europe. If, again, the Ionians were to be restored to freedom, if they were to be received back into the bosom of the great Hellenic family, if they were to commingle their destinies with the destinies of those who were the bone of their bone and the flesh of their flesh, if Europe was to be convulsed by tales of atrocities, committed by Turkish brigands upon helpless Bulgarians, if the wailings of massacred men and children, of outraged and dishonoured women, were to send

a thrill through the heart of civilized Europe,—it was because the Right Hon'ble Mr. Gladstone stood forth as the champion of liberty, and the advocate of the interests and claims of down-trodden and suffering humanity. In her agonies, India appealed to him for help. She prayed not in vain. Her prayer did not fall upon heedless ears. It met with a sympathetic response. Mr. Gladstone warmly espoused our interests. He presented our petition, and fought our battle. Now I ask, what has India to give him in return? What offering is she to make to him? We cannot, indeed, raise for him a monument of brass. But we may do something, which is worthier, better, nobler far. We may raise in the temples of our hearts an altar of homage, reverence and gratitude, due to the greatest statesman and the most illustrious orator of the age. We shall preserve that altar; we shall enshrine it in our grateful recollections and hand it down as a sacred memento to our children, and our children's children, so that it may not be said, that we know not how to be grateful to those who have won our hearts, are worthy of our gratitude, and have conferred great, signal and lasting favours on us.

Gentlemen, our first campaign is now over, and it would have been well, if our task had ended here. But it has become necessary for us to prepare for a second campaign. We cannot rest, so long as the defects which still continue to disfigure the Act are allowed to remain unrepealed. But I trust the second campaign will be conducted with the same moderation, prudence, judgment,—the same regard for the constituted authorities of the land, and the same devout loyalty, which formed the prominent features of the first campaign. It will be for the members of the Vernacular Press to say, whether we are to be handicapped in this struggle, or whether our course is to be smooth, easy and triumphant. Gentlemen of the Vernacular Press, and I see

here some worthy representatives of that Press, we have long and earnestly fought for you, because we believe that a valued privilege has been withdrawn from you, and that an unjust aspersion has been cast on your body. But, gentlemen, I beg of you, in order that you may be a source of power and not of weakness to us, in order that you may help rather than impede the successful prosecution of this campaign, I implore you to be moderate, cautious, discreet and prudent, in the utterances which find their way into your columns. There is nothing like moderation in language. A hard truth told in moderate language, is, to me, far more impressive and convincing than the same truth, told in violent and abusive language. But, above all, it is the duty of Vernacular editors, to ascertain the exact accuracy of the statements which appear in the columns of their papers. Truth is a hard thing to find in this unhappy world. Much more is the task difficult, in the case of the unfortunate Vernacular editor, distracted amid the complicated and difficult duties of his responsible office, and having little or no access to authentic sources of information. I deeply sympathize with my countrymen of the Vernacular Press in their struggle. But in every case and under all circumstances, let their motto be,—"Naught extenuate or aught set down in malice." A campaign, conducted under such auspices, with such moderation and with such regard for accuracy and truth, must, in the end, be successful. For my part, I can conceive of no other termination to such a campaign. If we are true to ourselves, if the Vernacular Press is true to its exalted and noble mission, if it realizes its responsibility, as the trustee of an infant institution, pregnant with great good to the people of this country, then I venture to predict the ultimate success of this agitation, and the triumphant conclusion of the second campaign.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEPUTATION IN ENGLAND.

At a public meeting held under the auspices of the Indian Association on the 3rd September 1879, at the Town Hall, Calcutta, the following Resolution was moved by Babu Amarendranath Chatterjea, Pleader, High Court :—

"That with a view to keep up and sustain the agitation which has already been commenced in England with reference to Indian questions and to place before the British Public the views, sentiments and aspirations of the people of this country this meeting resolves to raise a fund for the establishment of a permanent deputation in England, and this meeting further empowers the Committee of the Indian Association to take the necessary measures to give effect to this Resolution."

In seconding this Resolution Babu Surendra Nath Benerjea made the following speech :—

GENTLEMEN,

It has devolved upon me, at this late hour of the night when every one must be thinking of his dinner and of returning home, to second the Resolution which has been so ably moved by my friend Babu Amarendranath Chatterjea. Though this is the last of the Resolutions which have been submitted for the acceptance of this meeting, and though I am the last of your speakers, yet I am unwilling to allow, nor would I have you believe, that the last of the Resolutions is the least in point of importance. Gentlemen, you will have found from the terms of the Resolution, that it makes a call upon your purse. Financial considerations are with

most of us a very important class of considerations. I have no doubt all of us will weigh very thoughtfully and carefully the first and the second resolutions which have already been moved and adopted, but I am disposed to think, that there may be some amongst us who would be inclined to take a graver aspect of the Resolution which I have the honour to second. Gentlemen, the Resolution alludes to the agitation already commenced in England—alludes to the necessity of maintaining a permanent deputation in England. The question at once occurs, has an agitation been commenced in England, has the attention of Englishmen been roused to the importance of Indian questions, has the conscience of Englishmen been awakened to the tremendous responsibility which devolves upon them as the arbiters of the destinies of 200 millions of my countrymen? I say this is a question which at once presents itself for consideration. I may say, gentlemen, that within my memory, and within the memory of most of us here, there has scarcely been a period in the history of British relations with India, which has been marked by greater interest and enthusiasm displayed in the consideration of Indian questions than the session which has just closed. Questions affecting the finances of India, questions of Indian administration, have again and again been discussed in the British House of Commons and by the British public at large. The policy of the Afghan war, the policy involved in saddling India with the expenses of that war, the policy of remitting the import duties on cotton goods, the policy of continuing to exclude the people of this country from all practical share in their own Government—these and other questions of kindred interest and importance have repeatedly been discussed in the House of Commons, and their discussion has been followed by the outside public with no ordinary interest. Indeed Indian questions bid fair to become party questions. A high

authority has declared that it would be a calamity if Indian questions became party questions. I do not share this feeling of alarm. If India is to have justice done to her, if Indians are to have the full measure of their rights and privileges, that could only take place when Indian questions became important factors in the decision of great party contests. I ask when was justice done to Ireland? Precisely when Irish questions became party questions. When was the Irish land-law amended? Why, when Mr. Gladstone took up the question and it became the war cry of the Liberal party. When again was that great measure of justice done to Ireland, when was that badge of foreign domination—the established Church of England in Ireland—swept away from the face of the country? When the question of the dis-establishment of the Irish Church became a party question. As it has been with Ireland so will it be with India. I am not indeed frightened out of my wits at the prospect of Indian questions becoming party questions. I on the other hand rejoice at that prospect.

Well then at such a time of commotion and excitement with reference to Indian questions in England, the Indian Association resolved upon sending a delegate to England. The delegate was to represent to the English public, the views, sentiments and aspirations of his countrymen. He was to represent to the British public the deep sentiment of gratitude which inspires us, for all that England has done for us. He was also to point out the defects and shortcomings in the British administration of India and to suggest remedies and measures of amelioration. He was to be the bearer of a great message. The blessings of the nation were upon his head. We wished him Godspeed in his noble mission. Many a prayer was uttered for his success. And our wishes and prayers have not been unanswered. Our delegate has been successful in a degree which

has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the most sanguine amongst us. Within the short period of three months he has been eminently successful in quickening English opinion with reference to the great problems of Indian administration. You have all read the proceedings of the great meeting at Willis's Rooms. Within twenty-four hours of that meeting the Government was forced to lay upon the table of the House of Commons the rules regarding the creation of a Native Civil Service. Gentlemen, these rules have been discussed. I do not propose to recapitulate all that has been said about them in this place. A great authority, no less than Sir Erskine Perry himself, had confidently predicted that they would satisfy the aspirations of educated India. I regret to say that in this instance, Sir Erskine Perry has turned out to be a false prophet. We object to the rules, and we object to the principle which underlies those rules. But their publication immediately after the meeting at Willis's Rooms points to the profound influence which that meeting had upon public opinion in England.

It is from this quickening of English opinion with reference to Indian questions, that I anticipate the most hopeful results. If India is ever to rise to the full possession of the rights of British citizenship, that object can only be attained by persistent agitation carried on in this country, followed by persistent agitation carried on in England. The heart of India must in the first instance be profoundly stirred. Let us bear in mind that our primary field of work is in India. India must speak with one voice in tones of unmistakable import, the significance of which cannot be gainsaid. Then is the time to carry on our agitation in England, to submit our representations to the British public and lay our prayers, if need be, at the foot of the throne. Therefore, gentlemen, I say it is necessary in the first instance,

that we should mould and form public opinion in this country. There are great and burning questions awaiting solution in the future. The Civil Service question is not yet solved. Rules have been framed by the Government of India for creating what I cannot but regard as a Subordinate Civil Service. These are not the concessions for which we agitated, for which we prayed, for which we went from one part of India to another, to rouse public feeling, and for which we have sent a delegate to England. If there is to be a governing class, we must be members of that class. We must have a practical share in the government of our own country ; we shall permit no exclusive bureaucracy to govern India ; and it remains to be seen whether a great and civilized people will not comply with the legitimate prayer and demands of a subject race upon whom it has already conferred such inestimable blessings. There is yet another question looming in the not-far-off distance, which is slowly forcing its way into public prominence, and which must sooner or later claim a solution at our hands. That is the question of representative government for India. Gentlemen, you have read the remark which the London *Daily News* made with regard to Mr. Lall Mohan Ghose's speech, *viz.*, that the community to which he belonged could not be despotically governed. I shall not mince matters ; I shall not blink the question. I want to be very plain. Is there not a great deal of discontent in this country ? How do you account for it ? The benefits of British rule are obvious. England has established peace, tranquillity and harmony, in place of chaos, confusion and anarchy. She has ensured the security of life and property and the equitable distribution of the law. She has intersected this vast country with a net-work of railways and has facilitated intercourse between the most distant parts of the Empire ; and above all England is slowly welding together the different nationalities that inhabit this

vast Empire and is preparing the way for their ultimate union. These are the undoubted benefits of British rule and for which the people of this country will always feel grateful to the British Government. Why then is this discontent? Let us face the question and demand a solution. The reason is not far to seek. The English Government has given us a most liberal education. Englishmen have taught us their noble literature. Our minds have been imbued with those principles of freedom and liberty which run through every line of England's noble literature. Aspirations have been created in our minds, but the opportunities for gratifying these aspirations have been denied to us. We want to have a voice in the taxation and the government of this country. Give us these privileges. Let us have opportunities for the gratification of our legitimate aspirations, and then from one part of the country to another, there will be a contented, happy and prosperous people blessing their own Government and blessing the Providence which has placed them under such a Government. These are questions which await solution in the great future. But it will not do to talk at random with reference to this question of representative government. Mr. Ghose has been found fault with by Major Osborne for not submitting a detailed scheme with regard to representative government in India in his speech at Willis's Rooms. I do not join in that chorus of censure. At a meeting consisting for the most part of Englishmen unfamiliar with the intricate problems of Indian government, it would have been highly inexpedient to have entered into a detailed consideration of any Indian subject. I rather admire Mr. Ghose's tact and judgment in avoiding all such details. But as far as we are concerned, a definite scheme should be framed for the establishment of representative institution in India in consultation with the whole of educated India. Such a scheme being formed, an agitation should be set on foot in

this country, followed by agitation in England. First begin in India and then finish in England, if you wish to be successful in your agitations. I attach the utmost importance to constitutional agitation—to agitation carried on within the four corners of the law. Constitutional agitation is one of the most important factors of modern civilization. The noblest and most beneficent measures of this century which have shed a lustre upon this age have all been the outcome of constitutional agitation. Look to the emancipation of the Negro slaves, the enactment of the Catholic Emancipation law, the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the enactment of the Reform Law. These measures have been the products of constitutional agitation. The illustrious Wilberforce and his comrades agitated for 20 years to obtain the emancipation of the Negro slaves throughout the British Empire, and it was after 20 years of persistent agitation that he was successful in his great object. But for whose emancipation did Wilberforce agitate? For the emancipation of Negroes, who were not related to him by ties of blood, kinship or race. Who were the Negroes to Wilberforce or Wilberforce to the Negroes? Yet for these blackmen whose country was separated from his own by thousands of miles of sea, he spent the best years of his life and devoted the energies of a lifetime. For whose emancipation are we agitating? The Negro slaves in this case are ourselves. It is for the improvement of our own political status that we are agitating. But do we show anything like the persistency of purpose which the great Wilberforce displayed in those labours which have immortalized his name? We agitate a question for six months—for 180 days—and then when we find that our agitation has produced no substantial result, we say that we have a stubborn, and unreasoning Government to deal with, and retire gracefully from the field of our labours and sleep for the next six months.

I would in this place present another illustration to show the beneficial effects of constitutional agitation when persistently carried on, and that is in connection with the agitation regarding the enactment of the Catholic Emancipation law. What was this Catholic Emancipation law? The object of the Catholic Emancipation law was to remove an important disability from the Roman Catholic population of Ireland. Previous to this law, the Roman Catholics of Ireland could not exercise one of the most cherished rights of British citizenship, the right of representing their countrymen in Parliament. This law removed this disability. How was the law enacted? Was it a boon spontaneously conferred by a conquering people on a subject race? Ah no! it was wrung from an unwilling Parliament, from an unwilling ministry and unwilling sovereign. The King was opposed to it, the Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, was opposed to it, and Parliament was not very much in its favour. How was the agitation carried on in connection with this law? The agitation extended from one part of the country to another and to all sections of the Irish community. From North to South, from East to West, along the broad space of the Emerald Island, there was not a province, there was not a district, there was not a town which did not join in this great national demand; and King, Parliament, Cabinet Minister and all had to yield to the irresistible demand of a great and united people But it will perhaps be said that Ireland is in Europe, India is in Asia; that Ireland is situated within the temperate regions, India is under the tropics, and that therefore there can be no comparison between the two countries. But the condition of Ireland at one time was much worse than that of India. In no period of her history has India been so badly governed as Ireland was 200 years ago. You have all heard of Penal Laws. What were those laws? Let me tell you what

Burke thought of them. He said that they were so tyrannical and oppressive that even the ingenuity of the devil himself could not have framed a worse set of laws. Let me give you an illustration or two. An Irish Roman Catholic was not allowed to stay in Limmerick or Galloway. He could not be the guardian of his own children. If he was a tradesman he could not keep two apprentices, he could not possess a horse, the value of which was more than £5, and if he did, any kind Protestant friend might relieve him of the burden by paying him 50 Rs. These were some of the laws which disgraced the administration of Ireland two centuries ago, and now Ireland has emerged from those depths to occupy a position of equality with the mother country. Constitutional agitation has helped Ireland to attain her present position. We must follow the same process. English opinion must be quickened with reference to Indian matters. Englishmen are profoundly ignorant of Indian affairs. They know as much about India as they do about Kamschatcka or Siberia. To the vast majority of Englishmen India is but a geographical expression. Let me illustrate this point by a story which I have heard. A friend of mine was travelling in England, and there was with him in the same Railway compartment an English gentleman. Being together they naturally fell into conversation. In the course of the conversation the Englishman asked my friend, if he came from India, to which my friend said that he did. What do you think was the observation which this English gentleman made in connection with this reply? He said "Oh! you come from India. Is not that a country we have conquered?" This was all the information that this gentleman—apparently well-to-do and well-educated, for they were travelling in the first class—had of India, *viz.*,—that it was conquered by Englishmen, it might be, sometime before the Deluge. This sufficiently illustrates the position which I have taken up,

viz.,—the profound ignorance that prevails in England with regard to Indian questions. Yes, there is some kind of knowledge regarding India but it is chiefly derived from official sources. Your civil servants and your military men tell the British public what they think of you and your Government. It is time that we should tell our own story and inform the British public what *we* think of their vast Indian Empire. Like Lall Mohan Ghose you will always find a sympathetic and willing audience. And when English opinion has been thoroughly awakened with reference to Indian matters, I would be willing to trust to its operation for the amelioration of our grievances. On more than one occasion within the last year or so, has English opinion expressed itself with reference to some of the great problems of Indian administration. You all remember the Vernacular Press Act. English opinion with one voice condemned the Act. English opinion likewise condemned the remission of the import duties, and it protested against the meanness of saddling a poor and famine-stricken country like India with the expenses of an imperial war. Englishmen are essentially just. They are the sworn friends of freedom and have often been known to exhibit the most marked sympathy with people struggling for the benefits of self-government. When Italy was struggling for her unity, England extended to her the hand of fellowship and sympathy. When Greece was making a supreme effort to emancipate herself from the bondage of the atrocious Turk, England came to her rescue and secured her independence. We are not Greeks nor Italians. We are something better. We are British subjects, the subjects of the freest country in the world; the participators of the glorious heritage of liberty which England has made her own in this world. We are of England and we are not of England. We are British subjects and yet we enjoy not the full measure of the rights of British subjects.

But I feel confident that if we laid our grievances in this respect before the British public in a spirit of sincerity and earnestness, those grievances would be remedied, and our legitimate rights granted to us. In order to quicken English opinion it is necessary that we should have a permanent delegate in England. It may indeed be a question as to whether it is desirable to have a permanent or a periodical deputation sent to England. This question of detail may hereafter be considered. I think for the present it would be well if we were to put forth all our efforts for the establishment of a parmanent delegate. Englishmen are extremely busy. They have a great deal more to do than we have. What are the daily duties which engage the attention and engross the time of our rich men ? I do not wish to wound the susceptibilities of any gentleman here present. How does a native gentleman with Rs. 50,000 a year, ordinarily speaking, spend his time ? He has his breakfast at about 10 or 11 o'clock (a voice—"not at 10 or 11 but at 12 o'clock"). My friend corrects me and I shall accept his correction. Well then he has his breakfast at 12 o'clock. A mattress is spread out for him. His servant gets ready a *chillum* of tobacco. He stretches himself out on the mattress and takes up a Bengali novel to read ; probably Babu Bunkim Chunder's latest production. He is smoking his *hookah* all the while. Gently and stealthily the goddess of sleep overpowers him ; the book falls from his listless grasp ; the servant goes to get ready a fresh *chillum* for him and finds his master fast asleep. Greatly pleased, as he is saved the trouble of preparing another *chillum*, he quietly retires from the room and follows the example of his master. Then the master gets up at 4 or 5 o'clock, when his friends visit him. Cards are placed before the party and 3 or 4 hours are spent in that useful employment. He then has his supper and after an hour or two retires to rest. I

believe I have within a brief and limited space placed before you the daily life and duties of a man of Rs. 50,000 a year. If there are in this Hall, gentlemen with Rs. 50,000 a year, I sincerely beg their pardon.

Now what is the daily life of an Englishman in England with Rs. 50,000 a year? We shall suppose that he is a member of the House of Commons. What are his daily duties? Well, he gets up at about 9 o'clock. He has his breakfast almost immediately. The newspaper is on the breakfast table. He takes his breakfast and at the same time learns the news of the day. He then goes to his Club, meets his friends there. In the afternoon he is in the House of Commons, and if an active member, he is found taking the deepest interest in the great political questions of the day. He has his dinner in the House of Commons, if an important debate is going on in which he feels it necessary to take part. He is oftentimes detained late in the House of Commons and it is scarcely before mid-night that he retires to rest. You will have thus learnt from this comparative statement, that Englishmen as a rule have a great deal more to do than we have. Then again there are European topics of absorbing interest nearer home which serve to divert attention from Indian questions. It is now the Berlin Treaty or it is the Eastern Question or it is the Nihilist conspiracy which engages the attention of the English public. It thus becomes necessary that we should have a permanent delegate in England to induce Englishmen to take interst in Indian matters. It should be our look-out to keep Englishmen up to the mark. We should be always at them and we should never allow them to lose sight of their responsibility as the rulers of our country. They may not like Indian questions but it makes no difference as far as our delegate is concerned. Our delegate will tell them :—" you may or may not like Indian questions ; I come as the representative of 250 millions

of my countrymen, and you must listen to me whether you wish it or no." Now comes the question, who should be our delegates—Indians of Englishmen ? I say Indians, unhesitatingly. The simulated eloquence of the hireling advocate is not to be compared to the burning words which fall from the lips of him who pleads for his own country. Our delegate may not possess the eloquence of a Bright or a George Thompson, but who can resist the persuasive eloquence of that language which the heart spontaneously suggests ? The language of the heart throws into the shade the charms of the most fascinating eloquence. No amount of gold—not even the treasurer of the earth—will purchase this for you. Our delegate will plead in the language of the heart. Lall Mohan Ghose pleaded in this language, and all successors of Lall Mohan Ghose must plead in this language, and the appeal which is uttered in such language will be heard from one part of England to another. A large sum of money is indeed needed for the establishment of a permanent delegate in England. A lakh and a half will at least be needed for this object. A lakh and a half ! That is a tremendous sum for a poor country like India. Where shall we get the money from ? I ask where shall we get the money from ? Why ? You and I will pay for it. The Poojahs are approaching—the 18th of October is nigh. You spend thousands upon thousands upon nautches, upon festivities, upon presents. Is it too much to ask you to divert a portion of this money to this noble and patriotic object ? We have had enough of nautches, and merriments, and festivities. We have been holding high carnival over the bleeding and prostrate corpse of our beloved mother. A great crisis has approached in the history of our country. The time for action has arrived. The agitation for your rights has commenced. It will either end in your total discomfiture or in the triumphant establishment of self-government in

India. It is for you to decide whether it will end in one way or the other. Only the other day the English public subscribed 50 lakhs of Rupees to raise a memorial to a foreign prince who had died fighting under the English standard. Half a century has not yet elapsed, when England paid down 20 crores of rupees for the emancipation of the Negro slaves. If you want to have the full rights of British citizenship, you must at least emulate the self-sacrificing spirit of Englishmen. There are at least 500,000 educated Indians in the country. If each one of us were to pay a rupee, we should have five lakhs and not one lakh. Your demonstrations are ineffectual, your meetings are of no avail, your expressions of gratitude are as empty as the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal, if you are not prepared to come forward with your money contributions in furtherance of noble and beneficent schemes calculated to confer lasting benefits upon your countrymen. I know nothing which would be so acceptable to the illustrious orator, whom we wish to honour, as the establishment of this permanent deputation, the maintenance of a permanent agent in England, who will be your ambassador and your envoy, who will secure a hearing for your grievances, and whose efforts, it may be hoped, will lead to the establishment of representative institutions in India. I hope something more substantial will result from this meeting than mere speech-making and mere empty displays of rhetoric. The Indian Association has made its appeal to you. It is for you now to come forward to help the Indian Association in its noble efforts in this direction; and from all that I know of the growing sentiment of patriotism which animates the thousands of my countrymen in Bengal and elsewhere, I look forward with confidence to a cordial response being made to the appeal of the Indian Association.

EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

In accordance with a requisition made to him, a public meeting was called by the Sheriff of Calcutta on the 2nd March, 1878, at the Town Hall, to consider the question of the possibility of making retrenchments in public expenditure with a view to afford the people relief from the burden of heavy taxation from which they suffered. Raja Digumber Mitter and the Hon'ble Kristo Das Pal moved the first and second Resolutions respectively. In moving the third Resolution Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea spoke as follows :—

MR. SHERIFF AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to move the third Resolution which runs as follows :—

"That the enormous outlay on public works of all kinds since 1860 61 without adequate returns and commensurate benefits in many cases, has greatly strained the financial resources of the Indian empire ; and that reasonable and judicious economy in this as well as other branches of public expenditure is, in the opinion of this meeting, calculated to bring about the desired equilibrium between income and expenditure."

Before I submit to you the observations which, in my humble judgment, would recommend this Resolution to your acceptance, I feel it necessary to clear the ground before me, I feel it necessary to protect myself and endeavour to protect the conveners of this meeting against the possibility of any misaprehension. Not long ago a cry was raised

in England, an agitation was created there, a cry and an agitation which has not yet altogether subsided, and whose faint echoes may still be heard in the air, a cry and an agitation associated with the honoured name of John Bright, and which sought to impress the British public with the notion that it is the bounden duty of the Indian Government, in the interests of the people of India, to undertake public works, especially irrigational works, on a vast and extensive scale commensurate with the imperial necessities of this great country. I wish it to be understood that this meeting has not been convened with the object of denouncing that agitation as senseless or absurd. I wish it to be equally well understood that this meeting has not been either convened with a view to support that agitation. The position which we occupy has no reference to that agitation or to any movement that may have taken place elsewhere. We fully appreciate the importance of public works. We fully recognize the benefits of railways and irrigational works. Who would not wish to see this great country intersected with a vast network of canals scattering plenty over a smiling land? Who would not wish to see the great centres of Indian wealth, intelligence and commerce, brought closer to one another by means of railroads, which, while they would serve to stimulate commercial activity, would at the same time, promote fellow-feeling and cement the bonds of sympathy which ought to subsist between the varied and diversified races and peoples that inhabit this country? But there is one fact which we can never forget, which we can never lose sight of, *viz.*,—that India is a poor country, one of the poorest countries in the world, poorer even than Portugal, the poorest country in Europe. And poor as she is, she is heavily overburdened with taxes. Macullock Torrens says in his "Empire in Asia," that the Indian taxpayer pays 3*s.* 4*d.* in the pound in the shape

of taxes, while the English taxpayer pays only 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound, and it is well known that England is at least five times richer than India. Therefore, before Government undertakes public works on a large scale, it is essential that it should look to its financial resources. There is another consideration of the utmost importance which, in my humble judgment, it is necessary for Government to keep in mind, *viz.*, that the public works which it undertakes, upon which it expends money, should be successful and, perhaps, remunerative in their character. We are not opposed to Government undertaking public works for the benefit of the people, but it is essential that such works should be undertaken with due regard to our financial position and to the ultimate financial success of such undertakings.

Gentlemen, the resolution which I hold in my hand declares that an enormous outlay has been incurred in public works. I dare say most of you have read the speeches of Mr. John Bright. Well, Mr. Bright in 1856 or 1857, in one of his memorable speeches on India, in one of those speeches which have endeared his name to the people of this country and have made that name a household word with us, distinctly charged the Government of India with having done but little to develop the resources of India, and he pointed out how, within a given period of time, a single town like Manchester had spent more money on public works than the Indian government had done within the same period. Now by a strange irony of fate, we have met here this evening with the view not indeed of condemning the Government of India (for the Government of India I believe sympathize with us in our prayers on this occasion) but of recording our deliberate and emphatic opinion that an enormous sum of money has been spent on public works without any adequate returns or commensurate benefit. And for this result the Public Works Department is responsible.

In these days one hears so much about the Public Works Department that one feels a natural curiosity to know something about its origin and past history. The Public Works Department, as at present constituted, owes its origin to that eminent administrator, Lord Dalhousie. He established it by his Resolution dated the 21st of April 1853. The department itself thus organised by him came into existence in the month of May of the subsequent year. Before Lord Dalhousie's time the control of the department rested with the Military Board. The administration of the Public Works Department when under the control of the Military Board, was marked by gross inefficiency. Corruption was rampant in the ranks of its subordinate officers. It was when speaking of the Military Board that Lord Dalhousie made use of that famous expression—"Boards are Screens"—screens indeed for hiding the blunders and mistakes committed within their protecting covers!

Gentlemen, the Resolution speaks of the enormous outlay incurred in public works since 1861. What was the sum expended in that year? It was upwards of four millions and seven hundred thousand pounds sterling. The sum spent in 1877 was upwards of eight millions sterling. Thus then within the space of about 17 years the public works expenditure has by a process of steady development nearly doubled itself. Now the public works expenditure for the last seventeen years has come up to the sum of 113 millions pounds sterling, which made the average expenditure for each year come up to the sum of 6½ millions pounds sterling. I think that an average yearly expenditure of six millions and a half on public works is too large an outlay to incur for a country so poor as India, whose net revenue does not exceed the sum of 38 millions. But the most striking feature connected with this enormous outlay is that the cost of establishment has always been out of all propor-

tion to the cost of works and repairs. The ratio of the cost of establishment to the cost of works and repairs has been excessive and extravagant. In the year 1862, the cost of establishment was but 9 per cent. of the entire outlay. In the year of grace 1877, however, the cost of establishment was 28 per cent., or more than one fourth of the entire outlay. The cost of establishment has been steadily rising since 1862 till it now absorbs more than one-fourth of the entire outlay. As we are paying so largely for the public works establishment it is but natural to hope that the department would be efficient and the work would be properly done. But I am afraid, we are doomed to disappointment in this respect. I wish to speak with all possible respect of individual officers connected with the Public Works Department, for I know that among officers of that department there have been some great and good men, But I shall not be telling the truth if I do not pause to mention that there is not a single department under the Government against which the charge of incompetency and inefficiency has been so uniformly, so constantly, and so repeatedly brought as against the Public Works Department of the Government of India. Is the charge a true one, or is it a false one ? Is it founded on truth or is it merely conjured up by the malice of interested opponents ? Let facts speak for themselves. Let us take the case of the Ságar Barracks in Central India. Government had spent the sum of £66,000 on these barracks. Well, a competent committee of inquiry sat on these barracks and declared, that they must be abandoned as they were uninhabitable. Government had expended six lakhs and sixty thousand Rupees of the taxpayers' money, representing the sweat of their brow, their toil, and their self-sacrifice, and all this money had been spent to no purpose. The officers who had anything to do with the construction and supervision of

these barracks were all more or less punished; the Superintending Engineer was censured and punished, and the Chief Engineer was also censured and punished. That I have not in any way exaggerated the inefficiency and incompetency of the Public Works Department in connection with the Ságar Barracks will be readily seen from the following extract from Lord Northbrook's Resolution on the subject. "The failure of the Ságar Barracks," says the Government Resolution, "is the most signal instance of the waste of public money which has taken place of late years in the construction of barracks. The Ságar Barracks have cost £66,000, and after a careful inquiry, a competent committee, to whom the thanks of Government are due for the patience and impartiality with which they have conducted their investigations, have recommended that they should be altogether abandoned." In the same way, in the year 1870, the Allahabad Barracks were declared to be in a bad state, and the officers who had anything to do with their construction and supervision were all punished. In the same year an accident occurred in a store room in the gun carriage factory at Allahabad, through the fall of the central hall which gave way because it had been built with bad mortar. It is one of the simplest things in the world to discover whether the mortar used in any building is good or bad. But simple as the duty was it had not been performed, and the accident referred to was the result. The Supervisor whose duty it was to have seen that mortar of the proper quality was used in building the barracks, was dismissed, and his superior officers were all more or less punished. Instances of this kind might be multiplied to a very considerable extent. But, gentlemen, without detaining you any longer with such instances, I will quote the remarks of a distinguished officer of the Public Works Department, Lieutenant Colonel Tyrrell, who has now retired, which go very far to support

this view of the inefficiency of the Public Works Department. "With all that to its credit" (referring to the honesty and energy of the superior officers in the department) says Colonel Tyrrell, "I do not hesitate to pronounce that the Department, as a whole, if examined with an impartial and practical eye, presents a fearful spectacle of corruption and incapacity." Then he mentions an instance of waste and corruption. "To my certain knowledge, in the year 1865, says Colonel Tyrrell, "all the accounts of the Eastern Road in the Central Provinces from Nagpur to Raepur were most incorrectly rendered, and yet they would assuredly, but for my troublesome interference, have passed as safely through every stage of inquiry and audit, as they had already passed that of the Provincial Controller. My own measurements proved that upwards of 3,600,000, cubic feet of earth-work were shown as done and paid for, on No. 4 Section of the Road, along which it had never been done at all." Altogether, on this road, the Government was swindled out of between £5,000 and £6,000. Gentlemen, before I leave this part of the subject, I must ask your indulgence to be allowed to read an extract from the remarks of Sir Bartle Frere, in which that distinguished authority points out the "genesis" of public works, and shows clearly how public works were often undertaken without any regard to the actual requirements of the case, but simply to gratify the vanity or the whim of individual officers. Sir Bartle Frere says:—

We will suppose that it is proposed to carry on a road into the heart of a province, accessible hitherto to no wheeled carriage. Some body, generally a foreigner—a foreigner who comes to the country from a distance, who knows according to statistics that his tenure of office in that province is likely to be limited to three years or less, looks at the country and he proposes that a road should be made. Well we will suppose this gentleman who first proposes the

road, to be a Collector or Commissioner, to be the Satrap of the District. After a time he gets hold of an Engineer not without much personal trouble and correspondence, and he tells the Engineer that he is to survey a road 200 or 300 miles long, and that he is to send in a plan and an estimate of the cost, and in this part of the process certainly there is generally no unnecessary delay or waste of time. Satrap and Engineer both know that their time in the province is short, that great delay must occur before the final sanction is received; they, therefore, hurry this part of their preliminary work. If the general outline of the design is sound there is every temptation to put off the elaboration of details to a future time. The design is at last drawn out, and then commences the agitation to get the plans and estimates approved. You must recollect that it is not one Satrap only who has such works to bring forward, but there are a dozen in every province, all knocking at the door of the Provincial Proconsul to take up his pet project and urge it on the Local and Imperial Governments for immediate execution."

It will thus be seen that the Public Works Department often pays no kind of attention whatever to the requirements of the country and that it is fairly open to the charge of inefficiency. Inefficient as this Department is, it is now proposed that over and above the large sum which it spends every year, it is to be allowed to expend yearly an additional sum of £1,500,000 on public works, *viz.*, on canals and railways. This sum is to be considered as a kind of famine insurance fund, and is to be raised every year by fresh burdens imposed on the people in the shape of taxes. Sir John Strachey has remarked in his Financial Statement, that famines are to be reckoned among ordinary occurrences in India and that the government and the people of India must be prepared to meet these periodical visitations of nature. Gentlemen, Cuvier has somewhere observed in his writings that famines are impossible in this age. But the immortal founder of modern Zoology had no experience of

India. Little did he know that in the far East there was a country said to be the richest in the world, a country which had excited the cupidity of a Semiramis, a Darius and an Alexander, a country said to be overflowing with milk and honey, and abounding in the good things of this world, but the inhabitants of which were sunk in such gross, abject and degrading poverty, that famines had become ordinary facts in their social history. Famines, therefore, being regarded as ordinary facts and occurrences in India, the Government has wisely resolved in the spirit of true Christian generosity to initiate measure to avert famines. A Christian Government has generously resolved that the teeming millions of this country shall not be allowed to die of starvation. But how are famines to be averted, how is starvation to be warded off, how are the horrors of famine to be alleviated? Money is needed for such a purpose. Government has felt it necessary to raise £1,500,000 a year by imposing fresh burdens on the people. We do not object to be taxed for the benefit of our famine-stricken countrymen. But how is the money to be expended? Not indeed towards the liquidation of the famine debt of nearly sixteen millions of pounds that has been incurred in consequence of the Madras and Behar famines. The money is to be expended on public works, on Railways and Canals. Will that improve the financial position of the Government of India? Let us examine facts and judge the matter for ourselves. Railways, it is obvious, cannot avert famines. All that they can fairly be expected to do, is to mitigate the worst effects of famine by bringing a ready supply of food to the famine-stricken parts of the country. But it will perhaps be said that canals will certainly avert famines. Famines are brought about by want of water. If you bring water to the doors of the people by means of canals you would do that which is necessary to avert famines. It is

necessary that this position should be thoroughly examined and that we should have a clear and definite opinion about this matter. Let us note what the highest Indian authority his Lordship the Secretary of State, has to say upon this point. The Secretary of State, in his recent Famine Desdatch, remarked that the same causes which brought about famines also partially if not wholly rendered irrigational works ineffective. The Marquis of Salisbury was supported in this opinion by certain facts which Sir Richard Temple mentioned in his Despatch dated the 15th of April 1877. Sir Richard Temple in that Despatch pointed out that several irrigational works in the Madras Presidency had failed in consequence of the drought. Sir Andrew Clarke, an Engineer Officer of great repute and ability, the exponent of the views of the Government of India on all questions connected with public works, records as his deliberate opinion, that the difficulties connected with irrigation in India are too powerful and obstructive for any finacier or engineer successfully to grapple with.

Gentlemen, I will now ask you to direct your attention from the consideration of opinions to the consideration of facts. The Madras Irrigation Company turned out to be a failure. It spent a capital of about a million pounds. The Government of India lent it £600,000. Capital and loan were all sunk in their irrigational works, which did no good to any body. The attempt to improve the navigation of the Mahanuddy river was likewise a failure. The Orissa Canal Company was also a failure. I am aware that there have been some successful irrigational works. The Eastern Jumna Canal, the Western Jumna Canal the Godavery Delta, the Kistna Delta, the Cavery Delta have all been more or less successful. But, gentlemen, there is one fact in connection with the Canals I have just named which it is essential that you should bear in mind.

These works were executed by the former rulers of the land. All that the English conquerors of India have done has been simply to renovate them. Therefore, an essential element is wanting to enable us to know whether these works have been really remunerative or not. We have no means of ascertaining the capital that was sunk by the former rulers of the country in these irrigational works, and it is essential that we should have some idea of the capital so sunk, before we are in a position to pronounce that the works are really remunerative. Railways too, gentlemen, with some few exceptions, have not been remunerative. There are only three Railway Companies in India which are paying anything like a fair dividend. The East India Railway is paying a dividend of 7 per cent., the Eastern Bengal Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are each paying a dividend of little more than 5 per cent. The other Railway Companies are paying a dividend of 2 to 3 per cent. Railways, therefore, with few exceptions, have not proved remunerative. Canals too have not, generally speaking, proved remunerative or even successful. We are not here considering the moral effects of railways or the good it may do to the country to have easy lines of communication established between the different centres of intelligence, knowledge and wealth. We are looking upon the question purely from a financial point of view. Railways, with few exceptions, have not proved remunerative, irrigational works, with few exceptions, have not proved remunerative, and the Government is going to invest yearly a sum of £1,500,000 on these, financially considered, unprofitable public works. Will this outlay improve the financial position of the Government? Famines will take place periodically. Lives will have to be saved. Money will have to be borrowed. The public works undertaken by the Government not being so remunerative, their returns will not in all probability meet

the interest of the capital borrowed. Fresh burdens will have to be imposed on the people and the country will thus be brought to the verge of bankruptcy. This seems to me, gentlemen, to be the gloomy fate which hangs in the not-far-off distance if the Government launches itself into public works without regard to its financial position and the ultimate success of the works it undertakes to execute, but this enormous outlay on public works of permanent utility out of the ordinary revenues of the country seems to me to involve the violation of one of the fundamental principles of political economy, and a principle which is sanctioned by the dictates of common sense. The money is to be expended on works of permanent utility whose benefits posterity is to reap as much as we ourselves. It is, therefore, only fair that posterity should contribute their share to the construction of these works. In other words, what Government should do in order to construct these works of permanent utility should be to raise loans, the repayment of which should be distributed over several years according to the permanent character of the works undertaken, the interest of the loan being paid out of the taxes to be contributed by the present generation, and by those who coming after the present generation would reap the benefits of these works of permanent utility.

And if these works are remunerative, why are not private companies asked to undertake them? We do not want guaranteed companies; we have had enough of them. The Indian taxpayer knows to his bitter cost how much of his hard earned money has gone to the pockets of these guaranteed companies. I am aware there is a belief in some quarters that there is a feeling on the part of the Government of India against these independent companies. This belief found expression in the utterances of Mr. John Bright on the occasion of his last speech in the House of Commons.

And I am bound to say that this belief was shared by, at least, one such company, *viz.*, the Orissa Canal Company. The Orissa Canal Company held a meeting in London in November 1868. In that meeting they bitterly complained of the lukewarmness and injustice of the Indian Government towards them. I, however, cannot for one moment believe that the Supreme Government would allow itself to be carried away by any little petty-minded jealousy, or discourage independent companies whose operations would serve to enrich the country and would tend to dissipate, it may be partially, that cloud which is fast gathering round the financial position of the Government of India. I fully believe that under the encouragement from the Government, English Companies might be started which might do much to develop the hidden but marvellous resources of the country, and convert this famine-stricken land into a land smiling with plenty and over-flowing with milk and honey. Englishmen, who often waste their money in purchasing Turkish bonds, Egyptian bonds, Peruvian and Mexican bonds, might surely under due encouragement form themselves into private companies for their own advantage and for the benefit of India. If then the public works which the Government undertakes are not remunerative, it is clearly its duty to proceed with caution and deliberation and not imperil its financial prospects by reckless and unprofitable expenditure.

From what I have said, gentlemen, it is clear that an enormous outlay has been incurred in public works without adequate returns and commensurate benefit. It is almost needless to state that the financial position of the Government has been greatly straitened. Gentlemen, I will only cite a single fact in support of this view, which has been referred to by Mr. Fawcett in his last speech in the House of Commons. The Government of India, in order to raise the

paltry sum of £300,000, has felt it necessary to increase the duty on salt in Bombay and Madras, the duty on one of the prime necessaries of life, and amongst a people who have just emerged from the agonies of famine.

The financial position, therefore, of the Government of India is most embarrassing. It is involved in uncertainty and gloom. How is the Government to extricate itself from this situation? Surely in the same way in which a prudent man would extricate himself from a position in which he is threatened with bankruptcy, *viz.*, by the practice of rigid and judicious economy. Not being in any way connected with the Government and ignorant of the secrets of departmental administration, I cannot be expected to sketch out a scheme of financial retrenchment which will be exhaustive in its details and will cover the whole ground. Talking of measures of economy, gentlemen, I ask what necessity is there of having a Cooper's Hill College in England? Had we no good engineers before that College was established? Is it not well known that the best engineers that India ever had were the Stanley Engineers who entered the Public Works Department by competition held in this country in 1859? Sir Andrew Clarke does not see the necessity of this College; and the Government of India was not consulted when it was established. The College keeps up a continual supply of engineers for whom there is no work in India. Last year Government had 135 engineers in hand of whom 13 could only be employed. Let this College then be knocked on the head, and a much needed measure of financial reform would be effected. But measures of retrenchment might also be introduced outside the sphere of the Public Works Department. Why not introduced a large native element in the administrative work of the Government? This would be a measure of financial reform, as it would undoubtedly be of political justice. We

hear in these days a great deal of the dangers of Russian ambition, of the steady advance of Russia into Central Asia, and of the menace which that advance contains as regards the stability of British rule in the East. I will beg of the rulers of India to enlist on their behalf the gratitude of my countrymen by acts of financial reform and political justice, and if the storm-wave of Russian invasion should then burst on these shores, I will take the liberty of assuring them that that storm-wave would be rolled back across the Hindu Kush, and the Empire of Britain once more restored in India, resting this time not merely on 60,000, bayonets, but on the willing allegiance, the steadfast loyalty and fervent devotion of 250 millions of human beings.

Gentlemen, we are now about to approach the most august tribunal in the world, wherein are assembled the honoured representatives of the English people. I have every confidence in the ultimate success of this agitation. Having been in England for many years and having had opportunities of familiarly mixing with Englishmen, I know that in England they are anxious to do justice to the people of India. But they lack the necessary knowledge and information. It is for the people of India to place this knowledge and information within their reach. That being done, we may await with confidence the ultimate success of our efforts. I am sure our prayers will not fall upon heedless ears. Our legitimate demands will be complied with. Our just rights and privileges will be granted to us. In this way will England have performed her noble mission in the East. In this way the current of mutual sympathy between the two countries, flowing in ever-increasing depth, volume, and intensity, will prepare England to perform her duty towards India, and India to obey the behests of England, and enable them both to accomplish their high destinies in history.

REMISSION

IMPORT DUTIES ON COTTON GOODS.

A Public Meeting was held under the auspices of the Indian Association on the 27th March 1879, at the Town Hall, Calcutta, to consider the question as to whether it would be equitable to charge the whole cost of the Afghan War to the Indian revenues and also to consider the action of the Government in exempting a large class of cotton goods from import duty.

Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea in rising to move the second Resolution spoke as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I beg to move the second Resolution. The Resolution runs as follows :—

That in view of the serious financial embarrassments of the country—with a deficit of nearly five millions inclusive of expenditure on productive public works, with a heavy yearly loss to the Indian revenues consequent on the depreciation of silver—and a war that is still being waged on the frontier, and in view also of the comparative unsuitability of direct taxation as regards the people of this country and the difficulty of recouping any loss incurred by sacrificing any of the present sources of revenue, and of the declaration of Parliament that the duties are to be abolished when the financial position of the country admits of it, this meeting begs to record its emphatic protest against the recent resolution of the Government of India, exempting a large class of cotton goods from

import duty. And this meeting at the same time desires to express its deep sense of regret at the tone of the reply given by His Excellency the Viceroy on a recent occasion to a deputation which waited upon his Lordship with reference to this question, as calculated to prevent that free expression of opinion on the part of Her Majesty's Indian subjects on questions of public importance, which is so essential to good government in a country situated as India is, without the blessings of representative institutions.

GENTLEMEN, the Resolution speaks of the financial embarrassments of the country. It speaks of a heavy deficit of nearly five crores of Rupees. It speaks of a declaration passed in the House of Commons last year to the effect that the import duties on cotton goods were to be repealed as soon as the financial condition of India admitted of such a step being taken. And then after this preamble, the resolution invites this great gathering to enter its protest, at once firm and respectful, against the recent order of His Excellency the Viceroy exempting a large class of cotton goods from the operation of the import duty. This then, gentlemen, is the first part of the resolution. We now come to the second and not by any means the least important part of the resolution. In this part of the resolution, we invite this great assembly to express its sense of regret at the tone which His Excellency the Viceroy thought fit to assume in replying to the address of an influential deputation representing an influential Association.

The resolution speaks of the financial embarrassments of the country. The question, therefore, occurs—Is the financial position of the country healthy or is it otherwise? Have we financial difficulties to overcome,—financial embarrassments to grapple with? Or is the financial prospect bright, cheerful, radiant with hope? Talk of the financial embarrassments of this great country!—exclaims the incredulous enquirer. Why, you have a teeming population of over

two hundred millions of souls, a population at once frugal, contented, industrious and temperate ; you have a revenue of over sixty millions, and the revenue of the richest country in the world, that of the United Kingdom, is not over seventy millions. Why then, asks the enquirer, commit the absurdity of talking about the financial embarrassments of this country ? But, gentlemen, if we come to examine the question minutely, if we look into the matter a little closely, the dream vanishes, the enchantment disappears, and the gravity of the financial position appears in all its nakedness. Mr. Fawcett has lately been writing in the columns of the *Nineteenth Century* a very able and thoughful article on the financial position of India. In that article, Mr. Fawcett has proved by an array of facts and figures which cannot be questioned—for we may be sure they would have been called in question, if that were possible, as some of Mr. Hyndman's facts and figures have been disputed, and that by so high an authority as Sir Erskine Perry—I say in the course of that article Mr. Fawcett has proved by an unassailable array of facts and figures that the net revenue of the Indian Empire is not over sixty millions, but is only about thirty-eight millions. And I may here state that Sir John Strachey, when making his Budget Statement last year, admitted that the net revenue was about the sum fixed by Mr. Fawcett ; for he said that the expenditure of the empire was about thirty-eight millions and the net revenue was just sufficient to cover it.

What then, I ask, is the true financial position of India with a net revenue of only about 38 millions. Happily we are able to speak with some amount of authority on the matter, now that the financial statement is before us. Well now, examining the financial statement we find that the gross revenue of the empire for the year 1878-79 comes up to £64,400,000, (I am speaking in round numbers), and the

gross expenditure comes up to about £65,900,000. The net deficit, therefore, in respect of ordinary expenditure comes up to about a million and a half. Add to this, three millions and a half which represents the capital outlay on reproductive public works, and the gross deficit comes up to about five millions as stated in the resolution. But perhaps it will be said that we are not at liberty to include capital expenditure on productive public works in this estimate of deficit. Productive public works include railways, canals and other irrigational works. They are expected to yield a return. They are intended to open up the country, to bring food to famishing and starving millions, to develop the resources of the land, to add to its wealth, to augment its material prosperity and scatter plenty over a smiling land. But, gentlemen, an examination of facts and figures will show that these productive works are far from being productive in the true sense and are very unproductive indeed. Let me appeal to facts and figures in support of my statement. Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State, (and we may be sure any one in Lord Salisbury's position would only be too willing to palliate and not aggravate the failures of Indian administration), I say, Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State, addressing a conference at Manchester so far back as January 1875, declared that there had not been a single irrigational work undertaken by the English rulers of the country which had proved financially successful; and only such irrigational works proved successful which had been prosecuted on the lines laid down by the Mahomedan rulers of the country. But this was a mere matter of opinion. Let us come down from opinions to facts. Not long ago, Lord George Hamilton speaking from his place in Parliament, as Under Secretary of State for India, declared that in Bengal alone, in recent years, a sum of nine crores of Rupees had been spent, and that a large

sum of this money had yielded the magnificent return of only half a per cent. The Select Committee of the house of Commons on Indian Public Works has published its Report, and that Report has laid bare some startling facts. The Orissa Canal, we learn, cost over a million and a half, and instead of yielding any return, was maintained at an annual loss of about £16,000.

The Midnapore canal cost over £600,000, and again it was worked at an annual loss of about £5000. The Soane Canal and the Tidal Canal exhibited similar results. But the most remarkable incident in connection with these canals yet remains to be told. The shares of the Orissa Canal Company were quoted in the market at £60 per share and a generous Government purchased them at £100 per share! But not content with this display of generosity with the people's money, the Government actually went to the length of making a bonus, a gift of about six lakhs of Rupees or more to the Company. I can scarcely find language, sufficiently strong, to condemn this proceeding on the part of the Government. This is how our money goes—the money which some of us win by the sweat of our brows, which the dumb and voiceless peasantry of Bengal win at the cost of untold sufferings—at the price—I may say—of the very blood which courses through their veins and which warms their hearts. With these facts before me—and let him dispute them who can—I refuse to call these public works productive public works. Government officials may call them productive, the *Pioneer* may call them productive public works, but I absolutely refuse to call them, or to consider them as productive. I am, therefore, justified in including the capital expenditure on productive public works in the estimate of deficit.

I repeat the question what is the financial position of India with a deficit of nearly five crores of rupees. Bad as

our financial prospects are with this large deficit, it is rendered a great deal worse by the silver difficulty. I do not propose to discuss the silver question in this place. I may say that I know of no question in the whole range of economical problems of greater complexity and difficulty than the silver question. I do not propose to discuss that question. But this much I may say that for some years past there has been a steady depreciation in the value of silver, with a steadily increasing loss to the Indian revenue in consequence. In 1870, the Indian Exchequer actually gained something by exchange. But the prospect was soon changed, the outlook became gloomier. In 1874–75, the loss by exchange comes up to about half a million. In 1876-77, the loss comes up, by double leaps so to speak, to over a million and a half; and last year the loss by exchange was estimated at three millions and a half. Thus year after year the loss, by exchange, to the Indian revenues in consequence of depreciation in the value of silver is steadily increasing. The depreciation itself is owing to increased productiveness of the American mines of late years, and to the demonetization of silver by Germany, by Scandinavia and by the countries of the Latin Convention. A large quantity of silver is thus thrown on the market. The supply being so excessive, there is a depreciation in the value of silver. With a depreciated currency the Indian Government has to purchase gold to the extent of about fifteen crores of rupees to meet the Home Charges, a process which again must help to raise the value of gold in relation to silver all the more. It is in this way that India suffers such a heavy loss every year by exchange. It is simply impossible to exaggerate the serious character of the financial position brought on by this steady depreciation in the value of silver. Year after year, the value of silver is steadily decreasing; year after year, the loss to the Indian revenue is steadily increasing. Yet in such a season of

financial embarrassment when every available source of income has to be husbanded, the Government has not hesitated to give up a valuable source of income and to abandon a yearly revenue of nearly twenty lakhs of Rupees.

But gloomy as is undoubtedly the position of Indian finance, it is rendered gloomier still by the Afghan war. From the financial statement which has just been published, we find that a sum of £670,000 is recorded in the accounts of 1877-78, as expenditure under the Afghan war. A sum of two millions has been estimated as the expense of the war for the year 1879-80. The net cost of the war, it would seem, has thus been estimated at two millions and a half. The last Afghan war cost us fifteen crores of Rupees. But that was a war of great disasters and great triumphs. The present has been a war of easy triumphs and easy victories. There has been nothing like an organized resistance offered to the invading army. Fort after fort, citadel after citadel has fallen before the matchless valour and the disciplined onset of the British soldiery. To us, the loyal subjects of Her Majesty, this must be a matter of real gratification. But our gratification is the keener, our congratulations are the more heartfelt when we bear in mind that foremost amongst those who with a steady hand and a stout heart, are vanquishing the enemies of our Queen amid the defiles of Afghanistan are our own countrymen—Hindus, Mahomedans and Sikhs. We hope and pray that the future movements of the British troops into Afghanistan may be as triumphant and as victorious as they had been hitherto. But we cannot ignore the fact that the war has not yet come to an end—that the occupant of Cabul throne is a general of great skill and of vast energy and that Yakub Khan has not yet tendered his submission. And I may say that what has filled me with some degree of alarm is the fact that within the last few days there have been doubtful movements of bodies of

Russian troops across the Caspian Sea. A member in the House of Commons asked the question as to whether the Under Secretary of State had been informed of the movement of bodies of Russian troops across the Caspian. The answer was that he had received information about it, but was not in a position to say what was their destination. The continuation of the war must paralyze the Indian revenue. Already an addition of 15,000 troops has been made to the Native army; and Sir Henry Norman has estimated that the annexation of Kurrum, Jelalabad and Candahar must involve an additional cost of one million per annum. The late Lord Sandhurst had estimated the cost of a scientific frontier (the word scientific being used not in the sense that Dr. Sircar uses it week after week in his lecture hall, but in a very different sense indeed) at £3,000,000 a year.

Altogether the present financial position of the country is very gloomy indeed, but the prospect is gloomier still if possible. The revenue is inelastic and it is not capable of any very great expansion. Four-fifths of the revenue is derived from the land, salt and opium. The land revenue in Bengal cannot be increased without a gross violation of faith. In Madras and Bombay the miseries of the people are greatly due to heavy assessments. Mr. Philips has assured us that it is the ryotwari system and heavy assessments which are chiefly answerable for the impoverishment of the Madras ryot. The Report of the Deccan Riot Commission tells the same tale with reference to the Bombay ryot. The land revenue cannot therefore be increased in India. The Salt Tax cannot be raised either. It has already been increased 45 per cent. on the famine-stricken people of Bombay and Madras. And with reference to opium, we have it on the authority of Sir Rutherford Alcock who was for many years Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Court of

Pekin that the Chinese government are seriously thinking of growing opium in China.

Such then is the financial prospect of the country and we cannot see that that prospect is likely to improve. The past is gloomy but the future is not calculated to fill us with hope. It oftentimes happens that a period of financial depression in the history of a country is followed by a period of financial prosperity. But in the present instance we are scarcely in a position to entertain the faintest shadow of hope in this direction. It has repeatedly been pointed out both in this country and England that the most unfortunate circumstance in connection with the financial position of this country is its inelasticity. Our revenues are not capable of any great expansion. What our revenues are at present they will be for years to come. The principal sources of Indian revenue are land, salt and opium. The land revenue is not capable of any great expansion. A great portion of it is permanently settled; nor can you hope to derive any very great addition to your salt revenue. Your salt tax is a tax on one of your prime necessaries of life and the public in England at least will strongly resist any attempt to derive any fresh accession of revenue from a source so objectionable as this. The prospects of your opium revenue are gloomier still. The drug is forced upon the Chinese and as I have just pointed out their Government is seriously thinking of putting a stop to your importation of the drug by raising it in their country.

Such then is your financial situation and such your financial prospects. You have got a heavy deficit and a depreciated currency and an Afghan war to grapple with. In such a crisis in the finances of your country, your Government in the plenitude of its wisdom and in its conscientious regard for the welfare of the teeming millions whom Providence has placed in its care, has abolished the

import duty. I ask was there ever a more wanton sacrifice, a more utter disregard of the interests of the people of this country? If we had a native Government, would such a Government, I put this question to my countrymen, venture upon a thing of this kind in reckless defiance of public opinion and in total forgetfulness of the interests of the people?

But let me ask—why have these duties been abolished? Was it necessary to repeal them in the interests of free trade? I am an advocate of free trade and so I believe are the rest of my countrymen. But I emphatically deny that they had ever been levied for the purposes of protection. They had been levied before the Bombay mills had come into existence and they have been continued ever since. But suppose it were admitted that these duties are now protective in their nature, I contend that the question whether these duties should be abolished or not, must be decided not merely on economical but also on administrative grounds. Political economy may demand the repeal of these duties. The abstract principles of free trade may call for their sacrifice, but a great Government like that of this country should not be influenced by such considerations alone. The financial position of the country has to be borne in mind. I ask are the finances of the country in such a condition as to admit of the sacrifice of these duties? Is the Government prepared to give up a sum of £200,0000 at a time of heavy financial deficit, in a season of serious financial embarrassment, when every effort should be made to husband the resources of the empire, and to restore the equilibrium in our finances. It seems that the views which I have been advocating, have been practically endorsed by the House of Commons. Only last year they recorded a resolution to the effect that the import duties were to be repealed only when the financial condition of India admitted

of such a step being taken. The repeal of duties on a large class of cotton goods thus appears to have been ordered in direct violation of a solemn and formally recorded resolution of the House of Commons. But this is not all. In 1875 the Government of India under the leadership of Lord Northbrook, distinctly refused to comply with the requisition of Lord Salisbury to repeal the import duties. But evidently Lord Lytton does not consider himself fettered by the resolution of the House of Commons or by any precedent established by his illustrious predecessor in office. And straight-way in violation of the resolution of the House and in opposition of the spirit of Lord Northbrook's action in this matter, the present Viceroy abolishes the import duties on a large class of cotton goods. Was there ever such a reckless disregard of the interests of the people of India, shown by the exalted functionary to whom in a special degree are confided the care and the destinies of the Indian people. By the repeal of these duties the Indian exchequer looses twenty lakhs of rupees. How is this money to be raised? India is not certainly in a position to be able to spare it. Are we then to suppose that fresh taxes are to be levied upon the people. It must however be apparent even to the most cursory observer that the furthest limit of taxation has been reached in this country and that any further attempt to levy fresh burden might be the straw, which would break the camel's back. But perhaps we might economise the expenditure and thus restore equilibrium in the finances. There is a talk of economising expenditure in the government organs. We welcome it. But we like not the manner in which the reduction is proposed to be carried out. The British army in this country is to be reduced. Army expenditure is to be curtailed but we hear that it is proposed to begin by reducing the armies of the native states. In the name of the people of this country I venture

to enter my emphatic protest against such a proposal. The native princes have been truly described to be the pillars of the empire, they are the bulwarks of the British power in the East. The native princes throughout the period of their connection with the British Government, have been remarkable for their loyalty and devotion to the Paramount Power. During the dark days of the Indian Mutiny the most conspicuous of the native princes distinguished themselves by their efforts to prop up the sinking empire. Scindia exposed his life to imminent danger and his loyalty to the British Government cost him his throne. The Nizam, the foremost amongst the princes of India, exerted his great influence—and successfully exerted that influence—to prevent the flame of rebellion from enveloping the whole of Southern India. And yet these and other Native princes of India whose loyalty has been so conspicuous and whose fidelity has remained unshaken amid fearful trials, are now to be told that they cannot be trusted, that their loyalty is open to suspicion, that their professions of good faith are not to be believed in, and that they must disband their armies as they constitute a source of danger to the empire. I fervently hope, however, that Government will not commit the mistake of depriving the native princes of their armies and of thus dealing a serious blow to their power, prestige and dignity. Such a measure, I venture to think, will not in any way strengthen the Government, but on the contrary, by creating unfounded suspicions in the minds of the native princes regarding the intentions of our rulers, might have the effect of alienating the princes of the empire from the Paramount Power. The Government has committed a great mistake in repealing the import duties. Let it not aggravate that mistake by committing the still more serious blunder of weakening the affection and gratitude of the native princes by depriving them of their armies. It seems to me

that Government had no excuse whatever for falling into the mistake it did in the matter of the import duties. A few days before the remission of the import duties was announced, a deputation waited upon His Excellency the Viceroy in relation to that question. We all know the treatment which that deputation received at the hands of His Excellency the Viceroy. Never had a deputation, waiting upon an Indian Viceroy on a public question, been so grossly insulted. Was there anything in the tone and the spirit of the remarks which the deputation offered which called down upon their head this display of Viceregal wrath ? So far as I can see the deputation made a most modest representation in the most temperate language. Nor is it anything unusual on the part of a public body to wait in deputation upon the head of the Government of India. This display of indignation on the part of the Viceroy is without a precedent, and we must all deeply regret the unfortunate position which His Excellency is made to occupy before the eyes of all India in consequence of it. An Indian Viceroy in unseemly rage and expressing himself in undignified and unworthy language ! I venture to think never was such a thing heard of before in this country. Lord Lytton began by stating that the members of the deputation were the most favoured portion of Her Majesty's subjects, and that they bore but an inconsiderable portion of the burdens of the state. His Lordship then charged the deputation with having made misleading statements and with having insinuated calumny. Misleading statements ! What are they which the address is supposed to contain ? I challenge any body to point out a single statement which is misleading or which suggests to the mind of the impartial anything which is not wholly and absolutely true. I may say that I have carefully gone through the memorial, and to my mind all that it seeks to point out is that in the present critical state

of Indian finance it would be a grievous mistake to repeal the import duties. The deputation is also taken to task for having complained that the expenses of the Afghan war is charged to the Indian revenues. His Excellency remarked that he did not believe that there was a single patriotic subject of Her Majesty who would not think it a disgrace that India could not embark upon a war without displacing her financial resources and without seeking the help of England. I suppose, I may take it, that this great gathering is a gathering of patriotic citizens and that we yield to none in our love of country. Well, we have just adopted a resolution to the effect that India should not be saddled with the cost of the Afghan war. Lord Lytton may call us what he likes, but I venture to think that in spite of the high value of His Excellency's opinion in this as in other matters, we shall not be considered as being wanting in our duty to our countrymen, for having protested against India being held responsible for the cost of the Afghan war. The Afghan war has been undertaken for imperial purpose and it is being prosecuted according to the requirements of the imperial policy of England. It is not a local war, and India ought not to be required to bear the entire burden of the war. Is it unpatriotic to protest against a policy which unjustly and iniquitously seeks to saddle the country with a burden which does not fairly belong to it? If such conduct is unpatriotic, I for my part am quite willing to be ranked amongst those of my countrymen who are unpatriotic and are wanting in their duty to their country.

Lord Lytton's reply seems to involve constitutional considerations of the deepest moment. Let me ask—what are those means which we in this country possess for giving expression to public opinion? They are the press, the right of holding public meetings, and lastly, the privilege accorded to us of being allowed to wait in deputation upon men in authority.

Last year the Vernacular Press Law was enacted. We were however beginning to feel that the storm had blown over, when lo ! there darted forth from amid a clear sky the bolt of thunder which destroyed the *Somaprokas* newspaper. The *Somaprokas* has ceased to exist, because it published a silly letter in its correspondence columns. And now this year another most important means which we possess for giving expression to public feeling, has received a rude shock at the hands of the highest Indian authority. I attach the utmost importance to these deputations. They serve to bring the rulers and the ruled together, and the mutual interchange of ideas and views between us and those entrusted with the government of the country upon public questions ; cannot but introduce a healthy tone in the administration and exercise a salutary influence upon the rulers of this country. One by one we are losing all those cherished privileges which as British subjects it has hitherto been our lot to enjoy. We had fondly hoped that with the assumption of the Imperial title a new era would dawn upon this country. But we have been doomed to bitter disappointment. Repressive laws and unjust measures have been the order of the day. The Arms Act was followed by the Vernacular Press Act ; then came the remission of cotton duties ; and to crown all a most respectful deputation, representing a most influential association, which had waited upon the head of the Indian Government on a question of the utmost importance to this country, met with a rude and most undignified rebuff. But I despair not. I have every faith in the generosity and sense of justice of the British people. England is the temple of justice and the home of freedom, and the conscience of England, if it is once thoroughly roused to a sense of the solemn responsibility which devolves upon the British nation as the arbiters of our destinies, will yet do full and ample justice

to the legitimate claims and aspirations of the people of this country. There are indeed indications on all sides to show that England is awakening to a due sense of her responsibilities in the East. Articles in the English newspapers, debates in the House of Commons, speeches made outside the walls of Parliament, all incontestably point to the unerring conclusion that Englishmen are beginning to feel a deep and growing interest in the concerns of their great Eastern dependency. God grant that this feeling may take firm root in the English mind. God grant that the apathy of generations may give place to warm and active interest on the part of our rulers in the promotion of the welfare of the teeming millions of this country. Then will England have planted deep her rule in the affections of our countrymen, and the empire founded by British valour and heroism, will rest upon the unchangeable basis of the affectionate gratitude of a great people. We long for this day and as far as I can see there are signs on all sides to indicate the approaching dawn of this day so full of blessings to India and of glory to England.

THE

LIBERAL VICTORY & INDIAN PROSPECT.

A public meeting was held at the Town Hall, Calcutta, on the 12th May 1880, with a view to express the feelings of the native community at the overthrow of Lord Beaconsfield's Ministry. Dr. K. M. Banerjea was in the Chair. Babu Amarendranath Chatterjea moved the first Resolution which was as follows :—

"That this meeting desires to place on record its heartfelt satisfaction and thankfulness at the result of the recent general elections in England, which have ended in the overthrow of a Ministry whose Indian policy has been associated with measures of a repressive and retrograde nature, opposed to the traditions of British rule, and to the enlightened statesmanship which has marked the course of English administration in the East."

In seconding this Resolution Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea made the following speech :—

GENTLEMEN,

I have been requested to second the Resolution which has just been moved by my esteemed friend Babu Amarendranath Chatterjea, and I do so with pleasure. The Resolution contains a serious charge against the Government. It is a heavy bill of indictment against Lord Beaconsfield's

Ministry. What is the tribunal to which we appeal? What is the court before which we prefer our cause and seek for justice? If an English Ministry is guilty of incompetence, or if, in the discharge of its onerous duties, its conduct is marked by a disregard of the sacred interests confided to its care, the English people have a remedy ready at hand,—a vote of the House of Commons will expel a Ministry from office. And if the measure of its misconduct is not covered by the simple sentence of dismissal, the representatives of the English people in Parliament may go a step further and bring in a bill of indictment against the Ministry and impeach the Minister. But how do we stand? No vote of the two hundred and fifty millions of human beings who own and acknowledge the supremacy of Her Majesty in this country, who bask beneath the protecting shadows of her Imperial throne, who deem it the highest of all privileges to be allowed to call themselves British citizens, the subjects of a virtuous Queen, can oust an English Ministry from office or deprive it of power. Much less can we impeach an English Ministry. There is, however one thing which we may do, which Nature prompts, which the Constitution allows. The child in the miseries of its bodily anguish, cries aloud in order that its plaintive notes may reach the ears of its mother. The child here teaches a lesson to the man. Smarting under the repressive measures of an imperial *regime*, we too may cry out, till our lamentations pierce the vault of Heaven itself, and reach the foot-steps of the Throne of the Most High, till the whole world resounds with the echoes of our plaintive notes, and the conscience of England,—the conscience of a great people, which never slumbers when injustice is being done in a remote dependency,—the conscience which felt a galvanic shock at the massacre of the Bulgarians,—is roused to do justice to the millions of this vast empire. It is in the exercise of this

right which the Constitution confers, and in obedience to the promptings of our nature, that we have met here to express our rejoicing, at the downfall of a Ministry whose policy in India has been associated with measures of a repressive and retrograde nature.

The Resolution speaks of the repressive measures of the late Ministry. Is it a correct charge to urge against the late Government that repressive laws were enacted in India under its auspices? Are we guilty of any exaggeration? Let us beware that we are not betrayed into it. We are entering upon a solemn duty. We are about the condemn a great Government and a great Parliamentary party before the bar of public opinion and, I venture to think, before the bar of history, and our motto should be 'naught extenuate or aught set down in malice.' It will be said, was not the Empire proclaimed under the auspices of the late Government? And did not the proclamation of the Empire create in our minds the fondest hopes and anticipations? Was it not confidently predicted that the inauguration of the Empire meant the inauguration of a new era? Those hopes were doomed to bitter disappointment. With the birth of the Empire a new era indeed dawned, but in a very different sense from what had been anticipated. It was not an era of peace and public contentment, but an era marked by retrograde and repressive measures, unequalled in the history of English administration in this country. There was indeed enough in the memorable Imperial Proclamation to foreshadow the coming events. India will never forget the words of the Proclamation, the words that were read out on the 1st of January 1877, amid the grandeur and display of the Imperial demonstration. Lord Lytton declared in that Proclamation that high executive offices under Government would continue to remain in the exclusive possession of our European rulers, and that natives of India,

before they aspired to the high offices in the State, must establish their claims to them by their character and integrity. This was a slur cast upon the character of the people of this country, and we remember the outburst of indignation with which this message from the Viceregal throne was greeted by all India. There was not a native journal in the whole of the Empire—it did not matter what party or section it represented—which did not condemn the proclamation, or at least, this portion of it.

The Empire was proclaimed in January 1877, but an empire without a censorship of the Press is no empire. The Czar is an autocrat, and he has muzzled the Russian Press. The late Emperor of the French had a rigorous censorship established under his *regime*. A censorship of the Press for the new Indian Empire was thus essential, and accordingly on the 14th of March 1878, all Calcutta rose to read with astonishment an announcement contained in the morning papers to the effect that a Bill would be introduced that day into the Supreme Council for the better control of Oriental publications, and before many hours had elapsed—before the sun of the 14th March had set—the Bill had become law. I have no hesitation in declaring that amongst the many measures which have cast their shadows over the administration of Lord Lytton, the darkest and deepest is undoubtedly that which has been left by the Vernacular Press Act. There has indeed been a most singular unanimity of opinion in regard to this Act. I know of no great authority, whether in this country or in England, who has not condemned the Act as harsh, unjust, and unnecessary. But I forget; there is one great authority in whose favour I must make an exception. And he is Mr. Roper Lethbridge, your Press Commissioner, who now poses before the British public in the undignified attitude of the defender of a gagging Act, which has taken away from my

countrymen an important privilege. Mr. Lethbridge is paid by you, he eats Indian money, and he owes his position to you, and he thinks that the best way he can serve you is by trying to defend an odious measure which has deprived you of your liberty in an important matter. So Mr. Lethbridge writes a long article which the *Times* does him the honour of publishing in its editorial columns. But Mr. Lethbridge was not satisfied with this. He throws off his disguise, and wishing to appear in *propria personâ*, he writes an article in the *Contemporary Review*. No body took any notice of this article—at least in England,—not even Mr. Gladstone, who is particularly sensitive about these things. On the present occasion I am going to follow the example set by the illustrious politicians of England. I am not going to enter into an elaborate refutation of the statements made by Mr. Lethbridge. But there is one remark which I must bring to the notice of this meeting, and which I cannot allow to pass unchallenged and uncontradicted. Mr. Lethbridge growing warm with his subject, went on to observe in the article published in the *Contemporary Review* that a vast amount of moral courage and a strong sense of moral responsibility were needed for the enactment of the Press Law. "Moral courage"! "Moral responsibility"! These are words of grave import, and should not be lightly used. Talk of moral courage, of moral responsibility, in connection with the authors of the Vernacular Press Act! —Why, there never was a grosser misapplication of language, or another such instance of fulsome adulation. This is the first time that any writer has had the hardihood and impudence—I cannot use milder language I am sorry to say—to place the authors of the gagging Act upon a high platform of moral elevation.

But is this the only repressive measure under the late Government which we have to complain of? Is there nothing

besides which the historian of this period will note with a feeling of regret and a sense of shame ? On the very day the Press Bill became law, a measure was passed which practically deprived whole populations of peaceful inhabitants of their arms. There are various parts of the country where the possession of arms is essential for the security of life and property. But the Arms Act by making it obligatory upon her Majesty's Indian subjects to take out licenses under the Act has deprived them of their arms. For a native of India in the mofussil would rather be devoured by tigers than go to a European Magistrate for his license. I mean no kind of reflection upon Englishmen or English Magistrates. I simply state what is a well-known fact. But this is not all. The spirit of an Imperial *regime*, the tendencies of an Imperial administration, are abudantly manifest in this Act. The Act sanctions the most invidious distinctions of race, colour and creed. It applies to natives of India. But mark those to whom it does not apply. The Act is not applicable to Americans, Europeans, and not even to Eurasians. I have all along been brought up in the tradition, along with most of my countrymen, that all British subjects are equal in the eye of the law. This is one of the noblest traditions of English rule in the country. But it was reserved for the Government of Lord Lytton to exhibit to the world the spectacle of an English administration forgetting the noble maxims of English rule, and compromising the character which England has established in the eyes of Asiatic nations, as the dispenser of just, equal and impartial laws. But I ask, why should there be this invidious distinction made between us and Europeans or Eurasians ? Are we less loyal than they ? less dutiful to the Queen and the Constitution of England established by law in this country ? Let Indian history speak ; let English administrators testify. In the dark days of the Indian mutiny, the

princes, chiefs and people of India clung with unsurpassed devotion to the fortunes of the English rulers of this country. And now this Arms Act and the Press Act are flung to our teeth, and we are accused, or at all events suspected, of disloyalty. But there is yet hope. The stigma may yet disappear. The Liberals have come into power, and Mr. Gladstone is Premier. Within the last two years, I cannot recall to mind a single speech of Mr. Gladstone in which he has not condemned the Press Act and the Arms Act. Only the other day Mr. Gladstone, in addressing the electors of Midlothian at Bonyrigg, spoke of the Press Act in language of unmeasured condemnation. We may therefore look forward with some degree of hope to the speedy repeal of these obnoxious measures.

But we have not yet gone through the long category of unjust and repressive measures which have cast their dismal shadow over the Indian administration of the late Government. The Government of Lord Beaconsfield has always plumed itself upon the vigour of its foreign policy. Domestic legislation was a matter of but little consequence. England must bear her head aloft in the councils of nations,—she must be the arbiter of the fates of kingdoms and empires. Above all the power of Russia must be curbed. But this did not seem quite practicable in Europe, and it was accordingly resolved to check her power and to limit her influence in Asia. In an evil hour for himself, the Amir of Afghanistan had received a Russian embassy in this capital. That was made the pretext of a quarrel with him. I would not repeat facts and events with which you are all familiar, but I may perhaps be permitted to make this remark, that if the British Government had any grievance, it was not against the weak and inoffensive Amir, but it was against powerful and aggressive Russia. War was commenced against the Amir, and I will not hesitate to characterise this war as one

of the most unjust and unrighteous wars that have blackened the pages of history. We are not, however, concerned with the war itself; we are more concerned with its cost. Are we liable to pay the cost of the war or not? We are as much anxious as Sir John Strachey is about the financial independence of India, but we are also anxious that both England and India should pay their just dues. Now, how does this question of the cost of the Afghan war stand? I will ask you to consider for a moment the 55th clause of the Government of India Act. The clause provides—and I give you almost the wording of the clause—that except it be for the purpose of repelling or preventing an actual invasion or other sudden or urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not be applicable to defray the expenses of an expedition undertaken outside the limits of India, except with the consent of both Houses of Parliament. Now, the Afghan expedition was not undertaken to repel or prevent an actual invasion. The Russians were not thundering at the gates of Peshawar. Cossack boots were not to be seen amid the passes and defiles of the Khyber. It is true that with the consent of both Houses the revenues of India might be saddled with the cost of any war, whether within or beyond the frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions. But, I ask, why was this obligation imposed upon the Government to take a vote of both Houses before the Indian revenues could be applied to meet the cost of any war waged outside the frontiers of India? The object of the clause, as remarked by the late Lord Derby, who was in charge of the Bill in the House of Lords, was to protect the revenues of India. It is very remarkable that Lord Stanley, now Lord Derby, who was in charge of the Bill in the House of Commons, illustrated its import by remarking that under its provisions India would certainly not be liable for the expenses of an expedition into Afghanistan. His Lordship referring to the first Afghan

war, observed :—"He did not think the words 'preventing or repelling an actual invasion' would have covered such a case as that of the Afghan war, because that war was carried on at a great distance from our then frontiers in India, for the purpose of establishing a safeguard, not against actual invasion, but against a nation that at some future time might have attempted to invade our territory." (Hansard's Debates. Vol. CLI. page 2204.)

In spite, however, of this express declaration of a solemn Act of Parliament and of the interpretations of the responsible Ministers of the Crown, the entire cost of the Afghan war has been fastened upon us. We have protested, we have prayed, but our protests have been disregarded, our prayers have not been complied with. It is now an imperial war when it suits Lord Beaconsfield to air about his imperial policy ; it is now a provincial war, when India has to pay for its cost. But why should we complain of English Ministers ? Those specially employed to look after our interests and who are in receipt of high salaries have deserted our cause. Only in February last, both Lord Lytton and Sir John Strachey strongly advocated the importance of India bearing the entire burden of the war. Sir John Strachey was then full of glee at the financial position of India. It was believed that there was a surplus, and Sir John scorned the idea of England paying any portion of the cost of the war. A heavy deficit has been discovered, and what does Sir John think of the matter now, and of the lecture that he read upon the desirability of India, unaided by England, bearing the burden of the war ? I have just said that a heavy deficit has been discovered. If that deficit had been discovered in an English Budget submitted to Parliament by an English Ministry, what would have been the consequences ? The Ministry would have been straightway dismissed from office, and would probably have been impeached.

It does not lie in the power of the people of India to dismiss or to impeach their Finance Minister. It remains for us to look on and be astonished, to gaze with wonder and a sense of bewilderment at this spectacle of folly and incompetency, on the part of officials who draw the highest salaries which any Government in the world has to offer to its servants.

We learn, however, that a committee is to be appointed to enquire into this deficit. The prospect before us is brightening, but there is a dark spot which saddens the view. Sir Richard Temple is to be appointed a member of the Committee. In that case we should have been more glad if the electors of East Worcestershire had returned him as their Member. In Parliament Sir Richard would have found an ample field for the exercise of his powers, and would also, at the same time, have been comparatively harmless as far as India was concerned. And I cannot help thinking that it would be a grave mistake to appoint a late Finance Minister to sit in judgment upon the financial administration of this country. Sir Richard Temple's own administration might be the subject of inquiry, and surely he ought not to be a member of this Committee of Inquiry. But discreditable to the Government as has been the discovery of this deficit, I cannot but remark that the manner in which the cost of the war was defrayed in the early part of the campaign was yet more discreditable. The Famine Insurance Fund, raised out of taxes levied upon the poor trader,—which, I might say, represented their life-blood,—and promised to be religiously kept a part for the sole and exclusive purpose of alleviating famines, was diverted to a totally different purpose. The fund was employed to spread death, desolation and havoc amongst the villages and hamlets of the Afghans. The Afghans might be treacherous, they might be faithless, they might be cruel, they might be all that you choose to represent them to be, but you have no right to derpive a

peaceful and unoffending people of that which men hold so dear—their freedom. I confess I can scarcely find language sufficiently strong to condemn the action of the Government in the matter of the misappropriation of the Famine Insurance Fund.

It might be asked—what is the attitude of the Liberal Government in relation to this question of the cost of the Afghan war? The Liberal party have all along held that there should be an equitable apportionment of the cost of the war between England and India. I will read to you what Mr. Gladstone said in this connection in the House of Commons sometime last year, I believe when seconding a motion made by Mr. Fawcett to the effect that it is unjust that the revenues of India be applied to defray the extraordinary expenses of the Afghan war. Mr. Gladstone then said :—

"The Indian people had had nothing to do with this war. (Hear.) They are wholly guiltless, and had washed their hands of it. They had no representative in that House. Under these circumstances, seeing a war before him to which he was compelled reluctantly to attach a character such as that, he asked himself—could he bring himself to vote that the expense of this war, which was wholly our act, should be placed upon India? He said, 'No,' and he would go into any assembly of tax-payers and would appeal to them to say 'No' also. (Hear.) He was firmly persuaded that when they understood the facts they would say 'No.' (Hear.) He was persuaded that when they understood the facts and the real object and character of the war they would say that those who make war should pay for war."

Now that a deficit has been discovered, the Liberal party have promised help. Mr. Fawcett, in addressing the electors of Hackney the other day, declared that India must be aided

by England to defray the cost of the war. God only knows when this Afghan business will be settled. Now that the Liberals are in power, we may look forward to an early settlement of the question, at any rate we hope that justice will now be done to India and that she will not be required to bear the entire burden of this war.

But we have not yet come to the end of this dismal story of harsh measures and of unjust burdens thrown upon the revenues of India. I shall now invite your attention to a few remarks which I have to make in connection with the question of the remission of the import duties. These duties were repealed, as you are aware, in a season of heavy financial embarrassment, when the revenues of India showed a deficit of nearly four crores of rupees, and against the advice and the protest of the constitutional advisers of the Viceroy. What was the ground for the repeal? The ostensible reason urged for it was the removal of protective duties and the maintenance of the principles of free trade in the administration of this country. That was the *ostensible* reason urged for the repeal. What was the *real* reason? The truth must be told. The duties were repealed to please Manchester, and to secure the votes of Lancashire. "Honesty is the best policy" is a trite maxims, and every schoolboy knows it thoroughly well. But never was the truth of this maxim more signally illustrated than in connection with the recent elections, when, notwithstanding all that Lord Beaconsfield and the Government of India had done to please Lancashire, Lancashire quietly threw overboard the Tory party, and returned Liberal members—at least in the case of a great many constituencies—by large majorities. It might be asked—Do we expect much from the Liberal party, in the matter of the import duties? We do not expect nor do we want, that the duties which have been repealed should be reimposed. The duties are indeed doomed; sooner or later,

they will have to be all abolished. But we expect at least this from the Liberals, that they will not abolish them to the detriment of the financial and other interests of India. Lord Hartington, in an address that he recently delivered to his constituents, has given us to expect as much, *viz.*, that the duties will not be repealed until the financial position of India admitted of such a step being taken.

I will now pass on to the consideration of the Civil Service Question. One of the first things which the late Tory Government did in relation to India was the reduction of the maximum limit of age for the Open Competitive Examination for the Indian Civil Service from 21 to 19 years. This was the work of the late Secretary of State for India, the Marquis of Salisbury. The reduction of the maximum limit of age created a profound sensation in this country. It gave birth to an agitation the like of which has not been seen in this country. Public meetings were held in almost all the considerable towns of India to protest against this reduction, and praying that the limit of age be raised to 22 years, and that the competitive examination be held here for the benefit of Indian candidates. As you all know, Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose took these memorials with him to England last year. They were presented to Parliament by Mr. Bright. The Government of India replied to this agitation and these memorials by the publication of the Civil Service scheme in August last. We had been told that the Government of Lord Lytton had been most anxious to admit our countrymen into the Covenanted Civil Service. Judging from the scheme, it would seem the Government was most anxious to hit upon the most effective means of excluding us from that Service. Am I guilty of exaggeration? Let me for a few moments examine the scheme. The first rule lays down that each local Government may nominate a certain number of natives of India to appointments in the

Covenanted Civil Service. The Government *may* nominate, but it *may not* nominate ; and if it does not, what then ? There is no power on earth which can or which will bring the Government to account. But I ask, why nomination for natives and competition for Europeans ? Why this invidious distinction founded upon race and colour ? The Government of India practically says to the people of this country : "You natives of India, we will admit you into the service by the backdoor of nomination, but the front door of competition is reserved for Europeans, the *saheb logs*." The scheme is a huge and elaborate sham, and we must make known our minds to the Liberal leaders and appeal to them for justice. And shall we appeal in vain ? Ah, no ! Who was it that presented our Civil Service memorials to Parliament last year ? It was Mr. Bright, now a Cabinet Minister. Who is it that has again and again fought our battles in the House of Commons, in connection with the Civil Service question ? Mr. Fawcett, now a member of the Ministry. And above all, what did Mr. Gladstone say in connection with the Civil Service question when Mr. Bright presented our memorials to Parliament last year ? Mr. Gladstone said :—"There is the question of the Civil Service—I think it is difficult to resist the force of those arguments urged on behalf of the Indian people and by Indians themselves as they were indicated to-night by my Right Hon'ble friend, the Member for Birmingham, from the petitions he presented with regard to Civil Service appointments. I think we must not be turned aside by apprehensions such as those the Under-Secretary of State put forward—namely, the fear lest we repel from seeking Indian appointments the class of men we require. In the first quarter of a century of my lifetime, every Government and every Parliament was firmly and in a masculine spirit set upon economy. (Hear.) I am sorry to say that I cannot congratulate recent Govern-

ments or recent Parliaments upon having acted upon similar principles."

I have now referred to some of the harsh and unjust measures of the late Ministry in relation to India. We have met here to express our rejoicings at their downfall. Practically, the object of the meeting is to express our joy at the accession of the Liberals to power. Are we, the people of India, conservatives or liberals ? That is a question which presents itself to our minds at the present moment, and which calls for a solution. The promptings of my own mind would lead me to be a Liberal, to belong to that party which counts as its recognised leader the most conscientious and the most earnestminded statesman of modern times. But as a nation, are we liberals or are we conservatives ? We are neither. We belong to that party which will best serve us, best promote the interests of our countrymen, and best fulfil the awful and solemn responsibilities which have devolved upon England as the custodian of our interests. I confess there is enough in the traditions and the past history of the Liberal party which inspires me with the hope that they will do justice to India. Let me ask, which party was it that fought the great battle of freedom in England, and contributed most by its efforts to build up the great fabric of the English Constitution ? It will be found that the Liberal party has been foremost in the great fight for English liberty. It was the liberal party that extorted from Charles the First the confirmation of the Magna Charta contained in the Petition of Rights. It was again the Liberals that wrung from the Second Charles the Habeas Corpus Act, that expelled James II., invited William to fill the throne, and settled the Succession Act. Coming now to more recent times, we find the Liberals again in the forefront in the battle for freedom and progress. It was the Liberal party which removed the taxes on knowledge, abo-

lished the disabilities of the Jews, dis-established the English Church in Ireland, passed the Irish Tenant Right Law, made education compulsory in England, abolished purchase in the army, and enacted the Ballot Law. These are eminent services which they have rendered to the cause of human progress and reform, and they have made many declarations promising to do justice to the people of India.

But we rejoice not merely because we believe that the repressive measures of which we have been complaining will be repealed under the auspices of the Liberal party, but also because we expect important concessions from that party. The question of representative government looms in the not-far-of distance. Educated India is beginning to feel that the time has come when some measure of self-government must be conceded to the people of this country. Canada governs itself. Australia governs itself. And surely it is anomalous that the grandest dependency of England should continue to be governed upon wholly different principles. The great question of representative government will probably have to be settled by the Liberal party, and I am sure it will be settled by them in a way which will add to the credit and honour of that illustrious party, and will be worthy of their noble traditions. Whose voice was it, let me ask, that was heard loudest in the cry for Bulgarian autonomy? Who is it that is known pre-eminently amongst men as the friend of human progress and the defender of human liberty? When William Ewart Gladstone is our Premier, when John Bright is a member of the Cabinet, and Henry Fawcett is in the Ministry, I say let all India rejoice, let our rejoicings rend the air, and let us send forth a great voice of joy across oceans, mountains, and deserts, to welcome the friends of human liberty and of India to power. Now, there is gladness in every home, and there is joy on every face. A new era is born,—not the era of

repression and retrogression, but an era full of peace, contentment, of enlarged privileges, and of lightsome taxes. We have met here to welcome the birth of this new era. The booming of guns does not announce its birth ; the blast of trumpets does not accord it a welcome ; there are no portents visible in the skies, there is no rushing of wise men from different quarters of the globe to strew its path with incense and flowers. Quietly and unostentatiously the era is born, and in the name of educated India I venture to salute this new-born era, imperishably associated with the names of a Gladstone and of a Bright.

Now that the Liberals are in power, it has become necessary for us more than ever to exert ourselves to obtain for our countrymen our just rights and privileges. I cannot but complain of the apathy which we find so largely prevailing amongst our countrymen and the absence of energy and life in regard to political matters. Mr. Gladstone at the age of seventy, makes five speeches in the course of a day. We in this country are unfit for any work at that age. We sit on our beds, surrounded by our sons and grandsons and perhaps great-grandsons, dispensing blessings with an unstinted hand. The struggle for our rights and privileges has commenced. The struggle may not end in a day ; it may not indeed end in years ; the lifetime of generations may pass away, and the struggle will not have ended. For

> " Freedom's battle once begun,
> Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
> Though baffled oft is ever won."

The victory will be eventually ours, if we deserve it by our earnestness, our self-sacrifice, our devotion to the interests of our country and to the cause of duty. Generous England will sooner or later concede to us our just right and privileges,

and Britain, the august mother of free nations, will not hesitate to confer on her great Eastern dependency the priceless boon of self-government, which will mark the perpetual union between the two countries, and which will be fraught with blessings to India and glory to England.

SPEECHES

BY

BABU SURENDRA NATH BANERJEA

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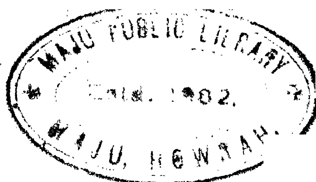
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CONTENTS.



STATUS OF THE BENGAL TENANTRY.

The following address on the Status of the Bengal Tenantry was delivered by Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea at a numerously attended meeting of the Bethune Society held in the Theatre of the Medical College, Calcutta on Thursday, the 29th March, 1883.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE for a long time been wanting an opportunity such as the one which has now presented itself to me through the courtesy of your Secretary and of your Committee. I use the language of sober truth when I say that I can think of no question more important, none more calculated profoundly to secure the happiness of the many millions of my countrymen than the one which, at the present moment, engages the attention of the Supreme Council. Your Civil Service Question, your Vernacular Press Act, even your Jurisdiction Bill dwindle into utter nothingness when compared with the momentous character of the problem, with which we are now confronted. "The nation dwells in the cottage" is the memorable utterance of England's greatest living orator; and truly speaking the agricultural community of this province form the back-bone, the pith and marrow of its vast and multitudinous population. The observer of a nation's history cares not to cast his eyes upon the glitter of courts, the pomp of capitals, the ostentation of the great,

or even upon the fascinations of beauty. From these he abstracts himself, and in the loneliness of the quiet village, surrounded by the homely faces of the peasants, he observes the nation, their character, their temper and disposition, and pronounces upon them the solemn but inexorable verdict of history. By your agricultural population, by their character and disposition, and not by those of your educated countrymen, shall you and your nation be judged. You talk of political rights and of national aspirations. You are accustomed to use very high-flown language in connection with them. But let me ask you in all seriousness, what are your political rights and national aspirations worth—what value can you set upon them, when the vast bulk of your agricultural community are sunk in the most abject poverty, living from hand to mouth, leading a precarious existence, unable to bear the stress of hard times and are decimated by thousands and hundreds of thousands in seasons of famine? A great writer, the father of modern zoology, the immortal Couvier has remarked somewhere in his writings that famines are impossible in this age. Little did he know that in the far East, there was a land abounding with milk and honey, a land which was said to be the granary of the East, the Paradise of the world, the garden of Asia, where famines were among the commonest of occurrences! To us has been reserved the honour—if honour indeed it be—of presenting to the world at this age, the somewhat unscientific phenomenon of famines. But how are we to explain these awful visitations—what is there to account for their recurrence? The explanation is apparent on the surface. Under the *Pax Britannica* which in one sense is more complete than even the *Pax Romana*, for it is less liable to internal disturbances, the reign of anarchy has terminated and the empire of peace has been established throughout the broad dominions of the Queen in the East. The result has been that the growth

of population has received an unwonted impetus. We are fast treading upon the margin of subsistence. The demand for food is greatly in excess of the supply. There are more mouths to feed than there is food for them. Hence poverty and destitution, and hence famines. That pernicious social custom which prevails among us, and which requires that every man must marry has added to the complexity of the situation. Every man must marry, whether or not he has the means of maintaining a family. Such is the ordinance of our society and the injunction of our religion. Never was a social injunction or a religious mandate more unreasonable, or more entirely in conflict with the plainest principles of nature and the injunctions of the Divine Law. No man should marry, until he has the means of maintaining a family. This is what Nature enjoins and the Divine Law sanctions. But we here in Bengal are violating every day and every hour the plainest precepts of the Natural and the Divine Law. And God is a jealous God. Nature revenges herself with compound interest upon the violators of her Law. And what has been the result ? A feeble, weak and emaciated progeny, unsuited to the highest purposes of man's existence, peoples this vast, this fair and beautiful province.

Such are the causes of famine, and of national poverty. And yet it must be obvious that the cravings of hunger must first be appeased before the aspirations of the soul can claim attention. Upon the broad and unassailable basis of a nation's material prosperity must rise the fabric of its political advancement and moral greatness. I venture to assert without any hesitation that the attainment of political freedom is impossible, on the part of a nation, stricken down by hunger and suffering from malarious fever. It is only when a nation have achieved a certain degree of material prosperity that they can rise to an appreciation of their political rights or

can seek to win them. Let me illustrate this truth by reference to the facts of history. I shall ask you to consider the period of English history from between 1825 and 1832. The employment of steam in the working of machinery, in the beginning of this century, communicated an unwonted impetus to the industrial movement. Money flowed into the pockets of the people, and they began to clamour for their rights. They demanded the borough franchise, and they pressed for the repeal of the corn laws. These men had been the poorest of the poor; they had been hitherto steeped in want and penury. How could men in their situation think of political rights or of political freedom? Their little ones were crying for bread; their wives were in want; poverty stared them in the face. How could they think of other matters save those of the pressing moment? Hunger must first be appeased; the blessings of political freedom can come afterwards. So thought these men, and who would not think the same in their situation? But when at last they rose from the squalid depths of poverty, the soul looked out into new regions of light. A clamour began to be heard, at first inaudible and indistinct; but soon the voice of agitation rose, it increased in volume and intensity and overspread the whole country. Presently the opposing forces were in dire conflict,—the forces of an ancient oligarchy straining every nerve to preserve an ancient constitution, and the new-born impulses of democracy, forcing their way into public recognition and claiming that homage which is the birth-right of the people. Democracy triumphed; the borough franchise was conceded. But Democracy passed from victory to victory. Flushed with its newly-achieved triumph, it attacked another stronghold of the oligarchical power.. Heavy import duties used to be laid upon the very means of subsistence. "These duties must be abolished" murmured forth the new-born genius of democracy. These duties accordingly

became the theme of bitter attack and of merciless denunciations. Democracy again triumphed. Democracy has indeed never been known to succumb. Captains and leaders may pass away ; the rank and file may disappear ; but such is the stubbornness of popular determination that it comes again to the attack and again it triumphs.

Yes the truth is unquestionable that the people must rise in material prosperity before they can hope to achieve their political rights. It is in this spirit that I ask you to approach this question. It is in this spirit that I shall endeavour to discuss this question. I know there are difficulties in my way. I know I am a partisan and one of the staunchest of partisans ; but I shall endeavour to steer clear of controversial points. I shall not enter into details. My great object in addressing you to-night is to enlist your sympathies on behalf of the ryot and to awaken your interest in the great question which so intimately affects his happiness, and I shall be content to abide by your verdict, whatever it be, whether it should be on behalf of the rich, the great and the powerful, or on behalf of the voiceless poor, to serve whom must be the pride, as it must be the highest solace, of every right-thinking man.

The Permanent Settlement forms a landmark in Indian history. The authorship of it belongs, in one sense, to Philip Francis, a name well-known in Indian history. It was in the year 1776, that he first conceived the idea of a Permanent Settlement. Ten years later, in 1786, he framed instructions for the drafting of a Permanent Settlement. In 1789-90, the Decennial Settlement was promulgated, and in March 1793, while it was yet in force, it was converted into a Permanent Settlement. The year 1793, is, in one sense, a memorable date in the world's history. That year witnessed in France the triumph of revolutionary principles, upon the ruins of an ancient monarchy, and upon the blood of the last representative of an ancient line of kings. The

self-same year witnessed in India the triumph of principles, round which many a keenly-contested fight has been waged by the advocates of opposing schools. What then is this memorable document ? What are its terms and conditions ? What were the rights which, under it, the Government conceded to the zemindars ? How has the great Settlement affected the happiness of the many millions of my countrymen ?—These are burning questions. I cannot hope to do justice to them all. I can only briefly allude to them in the course of my address. The examination of these questions carries the mind back to the early days of British rule, and we are led to inquire as to what was the status of the ryot, before the Permanent Settlement ? Such an inquiry is not one purely of theoretical interest. It is pregnant with practical results. For the Permanent Settlement is a veritable bone of contention ; and the rent-literature of the period previous to the Settlement throws a flood of light upon that historical document. I may here mention, once for all, that a great many difficulties have arisen from the mixing up of Eastern and Western ideas and from the attempt to invest in Western phraseology Eastern ideas, which were, at the time, but imperfectly understood. What then was the status of the ryot before the Permanent Settlement ? It appears from an examination of the records of those times that previous to the Permanent Settlement, the *khud-khast* ryot, the resident cultivator of the village, held land at an established rate, fixed, not indeed by competition, but by custom, and that so long as the Government demand remained the same, the ryot was not liable to pay any enhanced rate. This was the status of the ryot before the Permanent Settlement, and in that status he was left undisturbed by the Government. Let it be recorded, to the lasting glory of the British Government, that from the earliest period of its history, it has evinced the deepest concern and the utmost solicitude for the welfare

of the ryots. In the year 1769 the Government promulgated a Resolution, the first of its kind, in which they took occasion to remark, "that our object is not the increase of rents or the accumulation of demands, but solely by fixing such as are legal, explaining and abolishing such as are fraudulent and unauthorized, not only to redress the ryot's present grievances, but to secure him from all further invasions of his property."

That was in 1769. Before seven years had elapsed the Governor-General had another opportunity of testifying his concern for the welfare of the ryots. In 1776, the Governor-General in forming a Board, for revenue purposes, observed :— "Besides the immediate duty of this office, which I have above described, and which I suppose to be indispensably necessary and essential to the formation of an equal Settlement, many other points of inquiry are also useful to secure to the ryots the perpetual and undisturbed possession of their lands, and to guard them against arbitrary evictions."

Again in 1781, the Governor-General in sanctioning a plan of settlement framed by the Revenue Committee expressed a desire to afford every relief and ease both to the ryot and zemindar, consistent with and conformable to the ancient constitution of the country. The Permanent Settlement was promulgated in March 1793. But on the eve of the Permanent Settlement, and only four months before it, in September 1792, the Court of Directors thus observed :—

"We therefore wish it to have it distinctly understood that while we confirm to the landholders the possession of the districts which they now hold, and subject only to the rent now settled and while we disclaim any interference with respect to the situation of the ryots, or the sums paid by them, with any view to any addition of revenue to ourselves, we expressly reserve the right which clearly

belongs to us as sovereigns, of interposing our authority in making from time to time all such regulations as may be necessary to prevent the ryots being improperly disturbed in their possessions or loaded with unwarrantable exactions." This was said by the Court of Directors on the 9th of September 1792, just four months before the conclusion of the Permanent Settlement. And is it to be believed, for one moment, that the Government, all on a sudden, forgetting itself and forgetting the maxims which had hitherto guided its policy, in a moment of strange infatuation, delivered up the ryots, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of the zamindar? It did no such thing, and the examination of the Literature of the Permanent Settlement will prove the truth of my contention. I have already quoted the despatch of the Court of Directors recorded on the eve of the Permanent Settlement. But the Regulations of the Permanent Settlement are yet more emphatic. Section 8 of Regulation I. of 1793 lays down.

"To prevent any misconstruction of the foregoing articles (the articles, namely, under which the amount of revenue was permanently fixed), the Governor-General in Council thinks it necessary to make the following declarations to the zemindars, independent taluqdars and other actual proprietors of land:—"First, it being the duty of the ruling power to protect all classes of people, and more particularly those who from their situation are most helpless, the Governor-General in Council will, whenever he may deem it proper, enact such Regulations as he may think necessary for the protection and welfare of the dependent taluqdars, ryots and cultivators of the soil; that no zemindar, independent taluqdar, or other actual proprietor of land shall be entitled on this account to make any objection to the discharge of the fixed assessment which they have respectively agreed to pay."

The right of the Government to interfere for the benefit of the ryots, its eager concern for their welfare, was repeated nearly a quarter of a century later by the Government of Bengal in a despatch dated the 1st of August 1822, in which it observed :—"We freely admit indeed that even though the ryots of Bengal have possessed no right of holding their lands at determinate rates, considered in their relation to the sovereign, it was unquestionably competent to the Government in fixing its own demands, to fix also the rates at which the Malguzar was to make his collections ; and it was, we think, clearly intended to render perpetual the rates existing at the time of the Perpetual Settlement. The intentions being declared, the rule is of course obligatory on the zemindars."

Such was the solicitude displayed by the Government for the welfare of the ryots. What then was the exact nature of the rights which the Government parted with, under the terms of the Permanent Settlement ? What were the concessions made to the zemindars ? The Government demand was fixed in perpetuity. But the status of the ryot remained the same as before. He was paying the Pergana rate before the Permanent Settlement, and he continued to pay it after the Permanent Settlement. Under the Potta Regulations, he was to receive from the zemindar a Potta in which the amount claimed was to be consolidated into one sum. It is true that by Reg. VII of 1799, the dreaded Haftum of the ryots, the Zemindars were armed with powers unknown to the milder jurisprudence of this country. He could distrain, he could summon, he could arrest. But the object evidently of this coercive Regulation was to facilitate the collection of rents, so that there might be no excuse on the part of the zemindars for the non-payment of the Government demand. As a matter of fact, a great many estates were sold by auction, owing to the high percentage at which the Govern-

ment demand was fixed. To help the zemindars, the Haftom was enacted.

The Permanent Settlement, as I have remarked, has been a veritable bone of contention. There are those, and I regret to say friends of the ryots, who urge that the Permanent Settlement should be cancelled. This is a view with which I cannot for one moment sympathize. I look upon the Permanent Settlement as my Magna Charta. Upon that Settlement, I take my stand, and with it, I propose to fight the battles of the ryot. The only difference between zemindars and ryots in this respect is, as to how the text is to be interpreted ? The difference is not unlike that which exists between Roman Catholics and Protestants, as regards the interpretation of the Bible. I have no hesitation in saying that I look upon the Permanent Settlement as a great, if not an unmixed blessing, and I will explain my reasons at once ? At the present moment, a sum of about 13 crores of Rupees, making the calculations upon the Road Cess collections, flow into the pockets of the zemindars as the outcome of the Permanent Settlement. Now suppose, there was no Permanent Settlement, where would this money have gone to ? How would it have been spent ? It would have been spent, I regret to have to say so, but in a public meeting I am bound to give fearless expression to my honest convictions, upon the Civil and Military Departments of the Empire. I do not mean to say that Lord Ripon would have done this—for we have never had a more honest Government than the one under which it is our privilege to live—but previous Governments would have done it, and Lord Ripon would have found it very difficult to undo it. The money would have flowed out of the country, and instead of being spent in the environs of Calcutta, Otterpara and Rajshahye, would have been spent in the environs of Bayswater and Chelsea. But this is not my

only reason for supporting the Permanent Settlement. Whether wise or unwise, I think it is too late to think of withdrawing from it now. I have no hesitation in saying that every one in India is interested in maintaining the supremacy of the moral laws and in converting an Empire ostensibly based upon conquest, into one, having its foundations broad and deep, upon the uchangeable laws of morality and justice, and upon the observance of plighted faith. Sir James Stephen may talk glibly, if he likes, of the dangers of changing the foundations of British rule in India, but we who are here practically confronted with the perils and difficulties of foreign rule know that in order to be permanent, such rule should be broad-based upon the affections and gratitude of the people. We hear in these days a great deal about Russian ambition, about Russian aggression, about the steady advance of the Russian Bear over the steppes of Asia. But let me give this assurance to our Anglo-Indian rulers that if the Empire of the Queen in the East is to rest upon the contentment and affections of her people, they may bid defiance to the multitudinous hordes of the Russian Czar. Yes, we will not look behind the Permanent Settlement; we will not permit the Government to look behind the Permanent Settlement. We will fix the Government to its plighted faith, and whosoever, be he ryot or zemindar, who will not assist us in this work, is a traitor to the best interests of his country.

Such is the Permanent Settlement. Having secured its own revenue, the Government however slept over the rights of the ryot. The long period between 1793 and 1859 may be regarded as the dark age of the ryots, when the Huftum and the Punjum were in force. I have explained the contents of the Huftum, Reg. VII of 1799. The Punjum was Regulation V of 1812. According to the interpretation of a high authority, the Punjum enabled the zemindars

to obtain from ryots leases upon terms which might be agreed upon between the parties. If that were so, the Regulation was in conflict with the spirit of the Permanent Settlement and was therefore *ultra vires*. Moreover Section 22 of Regulation XI of 1822 laid down that nothing in Section 9 Regulation V of 1812, was intended "in any respect to annul or diminish the right of the ryots to hold his land, subject to the payment of fixed rents or rents determinable by fixed rules, according to the law and usage of the country." The Regulation of 1812 referred to the rents paid by middlemen, at least this was the opinion of Mr. Justice Morgan. Did the Sale Law then (Act XII of 1841) empower purchasers of estates at sale for arrears of revenue to enhance at discretion the rents of ryots? It would seem that only the rents of middlemen could be enhanced; and further, the power had to be exercised within a reasonable time.

But the night of gloom under which the rights of the ryots had remained so long enveloped was fast approaching to a close. The year 1859 was at hand. The authorities were slowly rising to an appreciation of a long unfulfilled duty. The zemindars were clamouring; the ryots were clamouring. A reconsideration of the Rent Law had become necessary and the Act of 1859 was passed. It was, on the whole, a beneficent measure. It was not an exclusive but an additional measure. It was not exhaustive, but only partially descriptive of the rights of the ryots. It repealed the coercive provisions of the old Regulations; it recognised the occupancy right; but it also recognised the right of the zemindar to enhance rent. The law, however, failed to give satisfaction to the friends of the ryots. They complained that the law sanctioned enhancement of rent on the ground of a rise in the price of produce, contrary to the clearest provisions of the Permanent Settlement. Under the

Regulations of the Permanent Settlement, the zemindar could only demand from the ryot the Pergana rate and no more than the Pergana rate. But now for the first time, the Government recognised a departure from the acknowledged principles of the Permanent Settlement. That was the contention of the ryots, and it was impossible to gainsay it. But the right to enhance has now been allowed to the zemindars for more than a quarter of a century and it would be impossible to refuse to them that right. In this matter we are bound to take not merely the partisan's but the statesman's point of view. Moreover, it would now be impossible to go back to the old Pergana rate. What that rate is, must, as regards most places, be a matter of pure conjecture. If the right to enhance is recognised, the next question is—how is that right to be enforced, how is the principle to be applied? The theory of proportion as laid down in the great Rent Case was to regulate the application of the principles recognised by Act X. The principle stated in the language of the mathematician is as follows:—"The former rent is to the enhanced rent as the former value of the produce is to its enhanced value." But the theory involved so many considerations that it was found to be practically unworkable. The zemindars complained that the right to enhance was recognised in theory, but it was inoperative in practice. The ryot complained that though the occupancy right was recognised by law, the zemindars defeated the beneficent provisions of that law by obliging the ryots to contract themselves out of it. The relations between land-lords and tenants became every day more and more strained. The Pubna ryots broke out in 1873. The attention of the Government was seriously called to the necessity of legislating, with a view to place on a satisfactory footing the relations between land-lords and tenants. The matter again and again came up before

the Government in different forms, and at last in 1878, a Rent Commission was appointed to consolidate the law. They submitted a Report, and they submitted a Bill, and it is upon the basis of their Report and their suggestions that the present Bill has been formed, and I now venture to solicit your attention to its scope and object.

The present Bill seeks to encompass two different objects. It seeks to help the ryots, but it also seeks to help the zemindars. To afford reasonable security to the ryot in the enjoyment of his tenure and reasonable facilities to the zemindar for the settlement and recovery of his rent are the two-fold objects of the Bill. The enjoyment of the occupancy tenure is to be the rule, and all resident cultivators are to become occupancy ryots, enjoying the full status of their position. The occupancy right is to be heritable, but it is also to be transferable. What Bengal wants, in the language of its late Lieutenant-Governor, is a substantial tenantry, free from debt and able to bear the scarcity of hard times. It is towards the consummation of this end, so devoutly to be wished for, that the energies of the Government are bent.

That such a proposal should excite opposition is what might have been expected. The zemindars regard it as an invasion of vested rights, as an encroachment upon privileges secured to them by the Permanent Settlement. It is very curious that Sir John Shore in 1792 when remarking upon the Permanent Settlement anticipated that this would exactly be the objection which would be urged, whenever an attempt should, in future, be made by the Government on behalf of the ryots. Mark the language of Lord Cornwallis in reply:—"Neither is the privilege which the ryots in many parts of Bengal enjoy, of holding possession of the spots of land which they cultivate so long as they pay the revenue assessed upon them, by any means incom-

patible with the proprietary rights of the zemindars. Whoever cultivates the land, the zemindars can receive no more than the established rent which, in most places, is fully equal to what the cultivators can afford to pay. To permit him to dispossess one cultivator for the sole purpose of giving the land to another, would be vesting him with a power to commit a wanton act of oppression, from which he could derive no benefit. The practice that prevailed under the Mogul Government of uniting many districts into one zemindary, and thereby subjecting a large body of people to the control of one principal zemindar, rendered some restriction of the nature absolutely necessary. The zemindar, however, may sell the land, and the cultivators must pay the rent to the purchaser."

Now, gentlemen, it seems to me a matter of the highest expediency that the occupancy-right should be extended to the ryots in general. Let me ask—to what would you ascribe, in part at least, the prosperity of Switzerland? Undoubtedly to its system of peasant-proprietors. Again how was it that France was able, at one bound, to emancipate herself, after her late desasters, from bankruptcy and ruin and attain a position of comparative affluence? Because France was able, in the hour of her distress, to rely upon the resources of her sturdy peasant-proprietors. Indeed, in our own country, the same phenomenon has been repeated. Wherever the ryots enjoy security of tenure, there they are well-off, and there they exhibit those manlier qualities of independence and honesty, which follow in the train of material prosperity. Amongst the Bhojepurians of Behar, the security of their tenure has been attended with precisely this result. Let me read to you an extract from a speech recently made in the Supreme Council:—"Their industry is marked and has resulted in the clearing of the jungle with which much of the land

was covered 50 years ago, planted with fruit trees, as well-irrigated from wells, and as well fenced as any I have seen in India. No one can encamp for a day in the tract without being struck with its exceptional prosperity, which contrasts strongly with the backward state of other parts of the district in which rents are high and occupancy-rights unknown. The credit of the cultivators is so good that, as you informed me, they generally borrow at the rate of 12 per cent., that is, on as good terms as their landlord. There would, therefore, be no anxiety whatever as to their surviving without assistance at a period of ordinary famine. As to their character, the objection I generally hear to it is that, it is too manly and independent. The Bhojpore wrestlers have a name through the country, and every man carries the large Bhojpore *Latti*, which he can use with great skill. They are equally ready to defend themselves in law-courts, with which the complication of rights inseparable from any system where the majority possess interest in land has rendered them familiar. I have always found them open, communicative, ready to deal or to serve, and their honesty is proved by the low rate of interest demanded from them; but they have another side of the character forany one who attempts to oppress them."

For my part, I confess I do not see why the zemindars should really create so much fuss about the extention of the occupancy-right? It is admitted even by their accredited representatives that nearly 90 per cent. of the ryots already enjoy the occupancy-right. If so, why so strenuously object to the extension of the right, when it can affect only a very small class of zemindars? Then again if the right of transferability is customary in most districts, it is wisdom and statesmanship, it is but the proper function of the Legislature, to invest the right with the authority of law. But gentlemen, it is the object of the Legislature to extend

the occupancy right gradually to the entire peasantry of the Province, and with this view, the Bill provides heavy compensation—ten times the enhancement claimed—to be paid to the non-resident (Paikast) ryot as the price for disturbance of possession.

Such then are the provisions with regard to the occupancy right. They would however exist in name only, if unlimited power of enhancement were conceded to the zemindar. It has accordingly been resolved to impose restrictions upon the power of the zemindar to enhance rent. The Bill therefore proposes that the enhanced rate of rent for the occupancy ryot should not be double the previous rate, and that it must not exceed one-fifth of the gross produce. The rate once fixed is to continue unaltered for a period of ten years.

These are the main outlines of the Bill as regards the occupancy-right. I am bound to say that the provisions of the Bill as regards enhancement of rent are not by any means so satisfactory. There are to be two concurrent methods, one by contract and the other by the decree of the Civil Court. It is obvious that it will be the last method which will be the one most extensively in operation, for it is impossible to calculate upon a happy state of things, where the differences between zemindars and ryots will be settled by mutual agreement. The Civil Courts will therefore continue to be the tribunals to which zemindars will resort for purpose of enhancement. But how are the Civil Courts to award decrees for enhancement of rent? The executive authorities are to classify lands and to prepare a table of rates. I am bound to say that I look with great distrust upon this portion of the Bill. Lands vary in the same district, in the same sub-division and even in the same village. If that is so, the task will involve Herculean labour, and the chances of accuracy must be greatly curtailed. And indeed an inaccurate table of rates would be worse than

useless. It would mislead the Court and would involve an injustice to ryots and zemindars alike. I must say this portion of the Bill is capable of much improvement, and I have not the slightest doubt that it will receive the earnest attention of the Select Committee.

In conclusion, it remains for me to draw your attention to two classes of ryots, whose condition deserves especial attention. I mean the ryots in the Khas Mehals of the Government and the ryots in the indigo-planting districts. Are you aware that there is one law for the Government as zemindar and another law for the ordinary zemindar? Why should there be this invidious distinction? Has the Government established its titles to this exceptional treatment?——has it shewn itself a more considerate landlord than the ordinary zemindar? Nothing of the kind. Why, the same cry of rack-renting is heard in all the Government khas mehals, whether at Pooree, at Midnapore or at Diamond Harbour. The other day, I received a statement from some ryots of Jelamutti and Mufnamuti, in the district of Midnapore, which contained the startling allegation that rents had been doubled and trebled by the Government within the last few years, that grievous was the burden laid upon them and that their sufferings were beyond endurance. I do not mean to say that Mr. Rivers Thompson is responsible for all this. There are the underlings of the Sub-Deputy Collector, and these are the men who bring all this ruin and misery upon the poor ryots in the *Khas Mehals*. It is my fervent hope that the status of these ryots will attract the attention of the Government, and that this exceptional law, for which there is no justification, will be done away with altogether.

It now remains for me, gentlemen, to draw your attention for a moment to the status of the ryots in the indigo districts. I have no desire to re-open old sores, or to call to mind the bitter controversies of the past. But in this public

meeting, in this temple of truth, I must give fearless expression to my settled convictions. You are probably familiar with the saying that the *Dadun* (advance) paid by an indigo-planter to a ryot is never liquidated. The poor ryot may be dead and gone, indeed generations may pass away, yet the debt is never wiped off. Such is the complaint which you hear made by ryots in the indigo districts. The other day a ryot came to me from Meherpore and he told me his piteous tale, and I repeat his tale, and I shall continue to repeat that tale, till it reaches the high places of Government and justice is done to the suffering ryots in the indigo districts. He asked me if there was no redress, no remedy for him and ryots in his situation? "Here is the Rent Law," he said, "about to be recast. The ryots are to have their just rights. But are we to continue to suffer from generation to generation and bequeath to our descendants an ever-increasing load of misery and suffering?" Such was his complaint, his piteous tale. The heart melts to hear it. But is there no remedy—I ask you and the Government, and I hope the sound of my voice will be heard beyond these walls? Is there no redress? Yes there is. Let the facts be stated, "nothing extenuate nor aught set down in malice," and by the irresistible logic of facts shall we yet conquer. Truth must triumph The forces of righteousness and of liberty must conquer. They have prevailed everywhere in the world, and why should they not prevail here in India? Let the truth be said about the ryot in the indigo-planting districts, and the God of Truth will send us victory.

Gentlemen, we have an obvious duty to perform, a duty, the magnitude of which I can hardly over-estimate. A Bill has been introduced affecting the happiness of sixty millions of your countrymen. They know nothing at all about this Bill. They are sunk in ignorance; they are sunk in poverty.

They are voiceless and powerless. Famines may decimate them; storm-waves may sweep them away, the most grinding taxes may oppress them. Yet they know not what it is to complain. They murmur forth not even the faintest cry of a grievance. Their voice never reaches the high places of Government. The all-seeing God, the Searcher of all hearts, alone knoweth what they suffer. It is for you to give voice to the voiceless, strength to the weak and the suffering. It is for you to explain to them the purport of this law, to awaken their gratitude, to stimulate their interest and to elicit from them their views in reference to a question, in which they more than any other section of the community are deeply interested. Such an opportunity for public service hardly occurs in the life-time of a generation. Such an opportunity has occurred in your life-time, and I ask you to embrace it and to show yourselves worthy of that liberal education which you have received. It is all very well to talk glibly of sympathy for the ryots and to affect to be moved by their sorrow and distress. But how many of you, I ask, are prepared to go from village to village and to communicate to the ryots the glad tidings of their political redemption? I call upon you to take up this work. I plead for the poor and the voiceless, and may God give me strength evermore to plead for them! They will not be able to requite your labours. What have they on earth to repay you with? But you have as your reward and your solace that which is the highest on this side of the grave, the approbation of your conscience, the mute gratitude of the poor, and above all the blessings of the Great Father of the meek and the helpless. It is to the acceptance of this glorious inheritance that I invite you, and I am sure my appeal will awaken an enthusiastic response.

THE STATESMAN DEFENCE FUND.

At a public meeting held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 18th February 1881, for the purpose of raising subscriptions for the defence of Mr. Robert Knight, Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea in moving the first resolution spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I may say that the appeal is made to me somewhat unexpectedly. I came here to this meeting, certainly not under the impression that I should be called upon to move any of the resolutions that were to be placed before you for your acceptance ; but as your Chairman has asked me to move this resolution, I gladly obey his call. The resolution which is placed in my hands is as follows :—

"That in the opinion of this meeting, Mr. Robert Knight, now Editor of the London *Statesman*, has done eminent services to this country, both during his stay in this country and also after his return to England, by successfully directing the attention of Parliament, of H. M's Government, and of the British public generally, to the best interests of India ; and that therefore he is entitled to the sympathy of the whole Indian population in his present position before a Criminal Court in England."

Well, gentlemen, I must say that I deem it a privilege to be allowed to take a part in the proceedings of this meeting. I look upon this movement, in the light of a demonstra-

tion, which brings into special prominence one of the most interesting features of our national character. It has been said, and indeed asserted with confidence, that we are an ungrateful people, and it has been said that the word gratitude does not occur even in that flexible and highly copious language which our fathers spoke in the primitive times of the Aryan race. Gentlemen, I would invite these calumniators of our race to witness the spectacle of to-day, this imposing gathering of several hundreds of my countrymen, assembled not indeed with a view to satisfy any selfish end of their own, but to mark in a solid and substantial manner their appreciation of the distinguished services which a foreign journalist has rendered to their country. It is because I regard this meeting as the outcome of a deep sentiment of gratitude which inspires us at this moment, in relation to Mr. Knight, that I welcome this demonstration, and I rejoice that I too have my humble share in it. But, gentlemen, before I proceed to comment on the resolution which is before us, I wish to guard the promoters of this meeting—a duty which in part has been performed by the Chairman—against any misconception which the situation might suggest. I wish it to be distinctly understood—and I repeat the observations of the Chairman—that in meeting here on this occasion we do not in any way offer any opinion upon the merits of the case, which is now pending in the Court of Queen's Bench. Gentlemen, I look upon the matter somewhat in this light, and I believe I speak the sense of my countrymen in this respect. Here is Mr. Knight, a journalist who has spent the greater portion of his life time in advocating the interests and supporting the claims of my countrymen. This gentleman has been fighting our battles for a period of more than a quarter of a century, and he fought our battles at a time when there were none others

to fight them, when not a single voice was heard in defence of the cherished interests of our country. Well, Mr. Knight has now been placed in a difficult position, in the honest performance of his work as a journalist in India, and he stands before the bar of a Criminal Court. Is it not our duty to respond to the appeal which he has addressed to us? I believe it is my duty, and I hasten to respond to the appeal which he has addressed to the people and the Princes of India. That is our attitude—the attitude of this meeting. But it may be asked—Why is Mr. Knight entitled to the grateful recognition of our countrymen? The resolution says that Mr. Knight has done eminent services to this country. Is this a fact or a myth? Gentlemen, I do not profess to carry you through the details of that life of conspicuous services rendered to this country. But there are one or two facts to which I am anxious to draw the attention of this meeting. Mr. Knight came to this country shortly before the Indian mutiny. You know what took place during the mutiny. You know that at that time most of our rulers lost their heads; they breathed fire and fury, and one universal cry for vengeance rang from one part of the country to the other. At that awful moment Mr. Knight stepped forward to fight our battles. He counselled prudence and wisdom. That was a signal service rendered to us on that occasion, and in recognition of those services the people of Bombay presented him with a purse of a lakh of rupees,—£10,000. But why go back to the days of the mutiny? Mr. Knight has done great services within our own recollection. Have you forgotten his sweeping denunciation of the iniquitous home charges? Sixteen millions sterling every year are drained away from this country, and what has Mr. Knight been doing, not once or twice, but persistently. He has been denouncing the iniquity of these home charges; he has appealed to the

conscience of England to bear at least a portion of these charges, which have unfairly been thrown on the Indian Exchequer. True, he has not been successful, but we all know that the cause of truth, righteousness, and liberty does not triumph in a day. All reformers must encounter many hard struggles before they can hope to see the success of their undertakings. This much at least is certain, that Mr. Knight has been able to create a powerful public opinion in England against the iniquity of the home charges. But it is not only in connection with this matter that Mr. Knight has sought to promote the interests of this country. You are aware how the import duties were remitted by the late Conservative Government with a view to please Manchester. Mr. Knight protested in eloquent language against the abolition of these duties, and made himself heard not only here but in England. When again an attempt was made to fix the cost of the Afghan war on the Indian Exchequer, Mr. Knight opposed the unjust proposal. Mr. Knight, moreover, has been the undaunted critic of the administration of this country, the terror of wrong-doers, the terror of our Magraths and our D'Oyleys, and our Kembales. Gentlemen, financial justice to India, the eligibility of natives to high offices, and the impartial administration of criminal justice,—these have been the watchwords of Mr. Knight, and to accomplish these ends he has spent the best part of his life. But this is not all. In the year 1877, almost simultaneously with the Delhi Assemblage, a fearful famine overwhelmed the North-Western Provinces, and what did the Government of the North-Western Provinces do? Why, they tried to conceal the famine, as if it could be concealed under one's cloak; they tried to conceal it, to make the Indian public believe there was no such thing as a famine, while thousands of our countrymen were dying in the North-Western Provinces. Sir George Couper endeavoured to prove

there was no such thing as a famine. Mr. Knight was in Agra at the time; he had the facts and figures at his disposal, and these facts and figures he threw in the face of Sir George Couper—and even a Lieutenant-Governor had to succumb to their irresistible logic. But gentlemen, the last and most important of the services which Mr. Knight has rendered to India is the establishment of the London *Statesman*. I think it will be obvious that if we wish to see any improvement or amelioration in the Government of this country, it can only take place by the free and unrestrained play of English opinion on the administration of India. I speak out my sentiments frankly. It is not from the Government of India that we expect justice in this country. I make an exception on behalf of the present respected head of the Indian Government; but it is not, generally speaking, from the Indian Government that we expect justice to be done to us. That Government, three years back, imposed on us the Vernacular Press Act, the Arms Act, the License Act, and a host of other harsh and unjust measures. We must appeal to the British public, and this duty is being done by Mr. Knight on his own responsibility, and for our benefit. It is on these grounds that Mr. Knight is entitled to the grateful recognition of our countrymen. And who is Mr. Knight? An Englishman, a foreigner, not one of your own kith and kin, not one of your race but a stranger to your sufferings and your grievances; yet this foreigner, this Englishman, has done you services, the like of which has not been done for you by the most exalted of your countrymen. I believe that if the lot of Mr. Knight had been cast among a more grateful people than we are, there would have been statues of him in every public street and square; and instead of our having to hold a meeting for the purpose, funds would have flowed in like water at the demand of Mr. Knight; and it is sordid self-interest which should prompt us to respond to the

appeal that he has made. If you do not assist Mr. Knight, if you allow him to get in to a scrape, if you do not allow him to defend himself properly, you will not after that get a man to defend you with the disinterestedness of that distinguished Journalist. I would dispense with the sentiment of gratitude altogether, and look at the appeal from the point of view of self-interest, and I ask you to respond to the appeal which Mr. Knight has made. Bombay paid to Mr. Knight the sum of one lakh of rupees. Is Bengal less rich than Bombay? Bengal is much richer. Is it too much then to expect that out of this rich province Mr. Knight may expect something like Rs. 50,000? Year after year you spend thousands on your nautches and other frivolous amusements. Is it too much to ask you to unloose your purse strings on behalf of one who has served you so loyally and so faithfully? It is not Mr. Knight who is on his trial, but it is your interest that is at stake. If the London *Statesman* is to be extinguished, you will have no organ in the Press to make known your grievances to the British public. Mr. Knight appeals to you, and I on his behalf emphasize that appeal and let him who has the heart dare to refuse to respond to it. Gentlemen, if you have any feelings for your country, if you love your countrymen, if you are anxious to promote the best interests of your country, I feel confident you will generously respond to the appeal which Mr. Knight makes.

FREE MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS

At the Annual Meeting of the Suburban Rate-payers' Association held, in the hall of the London Missionary Society's Institution Bhowanipore, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 23rd July, 1881. Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea on being requested spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I hardly know what right I have to be here. I am not a rate-payer, nor even a resident of the suburbs, nor have I the privilege of holding property within your municipal limits; but the kindly letter of invitation which your Vice-President addressed to me couples my name with a movement which, gentlemen, is as dear to me as it is to you, as indeed it is to all of us. I thank you sincerely for giving me this opportunity of expressing my warm sympathy with the objects of your Association and the noble cause which it represents. I was not surprised to hear that you had enemies. Causes the noblest and the most beneficent, that scattered their blessings over a whole continent, had their enemies—their opponents, aye their calumniators. The world is prolific in its brood of Judas Iscariots—men who themselves would do nothing, not even move their little fingers for the benefit of their fellow-men, but who to serve their own interests would betray the cause of liberty and justice. I do not regret

that it is so. A little harsh and adverse criticism puts to the test the goodness of a cause, and brings out its latent and hidden energies. Did ever Christianity present a nobler aspect—did it ever attain a higher level of moral grandeur—than in those dark days of persecution and suffering, when the conscript Fathers of the Church laid down their lives for the sake of conscience and on the altar of truth? Even the persecution which has set in now against the cause which this Association represents will show what stuff we are made of, and will pave the way for the complete and thorough triumph of the principles, which we represent. You have asked me to state whether the people in the mofussil appreciate the boon of municipal self-government. I must confess that the question seems to me to be somewhat absurd; but this absurd question, I must confess, has been forced upon you by your enemies. Let me ask you, was there ever a people which did not wish to have the control of its own affairs—the management of its own destinies? Self-government is the ordering of nature, the law of the universe, and the will of God; and neither Lieutenant-Governors like Sir Ashley Eden, nor specially-gifted Secretaries like Mr. Mackenzie, nor authors and philosophers like Mr. Sterndale, will convince me, or any man in India in possession of his common sense, that the people of Bengal are an exception to this universal law. Have we not indeed been accustomed, from the earliest times, to manage our own municipal affairs? What were those ancient village communities? They had much more power than our municipalities. Not only did they look to the conservancy and sanitation of the villages, but they controlled the police and they administered justice. Your Chairman has remarked that in the mofussil your people are apathetic with regard to the boon of municipal self-government. I am prepared to say that it is not so. Wherever I went to agitate the question of

municipal self-government, I was received with open arms. It was a consideration not shown to me personally, but to the noble cause which I represented. They gathered round my banner in their hundreds and thousands with fervour and enthusiasm, and they blessed the Indian Association which had initiated this movement. But suppose it were otherwise,—suppose, instead of this active interest, our countrymen showed apathy and indifference,—would it not still be our duty to infuse new light and to impart new enthusiasm in regard to this great cause, and make them feel the same interest in relation to it which distinguishes your noble Association? I entirely agree with the remark of the Chairman that the time has come for us to agitate for municipal self-government. "Now or Never" should be our motto. Lord Ripon has expressed himself in favour of this movement in reply to the address of the Municipality of Dehra Doon. His Lordship was pleased to say that he had it in charge from her Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress herself to look to the Municipal Administration of the Empire, for there the political education of the people begins. When his Excellency was here, he welcomed the Calcutta Municipality on the ground especially that its constitution in part was of a representative character. I feel convinced that if the great public bodies of the land were united together on this great question, complete success must crown our efforts. It is absurd to say that we are not fit for local self-government. Were the English fit for it in the 13th century, when Simon de Montford summoned the House of Commons? Or were the Romans fit for it in the days of the Republic, when they governed the whole of the Italian Peninsula? If we are unfit to manage our local concerns after a century of British rule, let me ask to whom would the discredit belong? We may dismiss this consideration altogether as idle and frivolous. Let all the

associations of the country unite together and let them agitate ; they may not get the boon all at once—they may not get it for years together—the lifetime of a generation may pass away,—but if we really are in earnest—if we infuse into this agitation the life and energy of the West,—then I venture to predict that all that obscurity and haze which hangs over the satisfactory settlement of this question, will disappear before the morning sun of liberty and light, and the glorious agitation in which the country is so deeply interested will be brought to a successful and triumphant conclusion for the benefit of the governed as well as of the governors.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

At a Public Meeting held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Wednesday the 30th January, 1884, at 4 P. M., *Dr. W. W. Hunter,* L.L.D., C.I.E., *in the Chair, the Hon'ble Mr. Gibbs moved the first resolution which ran as follows :—*

THAT this meeting, representing all classes of the community, records its sense of the loss sustained by the people of India by the death of Keshub Chunder Sen.

In rising to support the first resolution Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to support the Resolution which has been proposed by the Hon'ble Mr. Gibbs, and seconded by Newab Abdul Lattif Khan Bahadur. It is with a degree of melancholy interest that I take part in the mournful ceremony of to-day. A prince and a great man has fallen in our midst—one whose purity of life, loftiness of aims and principles, and single-minded devotion to the highest interests of his country, has entitled him, through generations yet unborn, to the admiring gratitude of posterity. It is around the ashes of such a man that we are assembled, to join our tears with those of his widowed wife and disconsolate family, and to mark, in some tangible form, the expression of our deep grief and of the

sense of irreparable loss which the community has sustained by his untimely death. This is not the first time that these walls have re-echoed to the dismal sounds of a great national sorrow. Ten years ago, within this hall, and about this time of the year, before an assembly, as august and as representative, the nation were gathered together to mourn the death of a great Judge who had just been cut off in the prime of manhood, in the full maturity of his intellectual powers, with a great career and a great prospect before him. We know not how it is, but in the inscrutable ways of Providence, our best men are taken away from our midst, precisely when we most seem to need their guidance and their directing wisdom. Who does not now mourn the death of Dwarka Nath Mitter? Who does not wish that in these exciting times, we had the benefit of the commanding eloquence of Ram Gopal Ghose, and the serene wisdom of Hurrish Chunder Mukerji? In Europe, great moral teachers and eminent public men lay down the burden of life, full of years. But in this unhappy country, before the victory has been achieved, before life's battle has been won, the hero succumbs. In the presence of these awful decrees of the Supreme, it is not permitted to us to be inquisitive. We bow to them trustingly and in the abundant faith that the Lord has, in his own good time, called his chosen servants to their rest. So, too, Keshub has gone to his rest, and we mourn his irreparable loss. The Resolution says that all India grieves over the untimely death of Keshub Chunder Sen. Is this true, or is it the usual language of convention that we are accustomed to find in eulogistic Resolutions? I have no hesitation in saying that it represents the pure and simple truth. From the wilds of Assam to the hills of Quetta, from Mussurie on the north to Madras on the south, there is one common, universal sentiment of grief that pervades the national mind. Hindoos

and Mussulmans, Parsees and Christians, all sects, all creeds, and all races have, for the time being, forgotten their mutual differences, and have united to pay the tribute of veneration to the memory of the illustrious dead. How are we to explain this circumstance? For Keshub, after all, was the leader of a community, which, in point of numbers, is simply lost in the boundless ocean of Indian sects. Moreover, he was only the leader of a portion of the Brahmo community. What then is there to explain this universal outburst of national grief, these tears shed around his ashes? The explanation is not far to seek. It is obvious to the inquisitive gaze of the earnest seeker after truth. Keshub Chunder Sen was in the field of religion, the embodiment of those new-born forces which English education has called forth into existence. He was their living impersonation, their most powerful exponent. English education ever since its introduction into the country, has acted as a dissolvent upon the framework of Native Indian Society. It has melted away in the fierce crucible of an over-mastering logic the attenuated lineaments of an ancient, though decrepit faith. From the very first Hinduism received a shock, such as it had never felt before. The whole of that noble fabric, which, for centuries, had withstood the fiercest attacks of Kings and Emperors, seemed to topple from its basement. A strange impulse was felt, as if communicated from the clouds on high. There was an awakening of the national conscience. The scales seemed to drop from the eyes of the nation. They looked out. They saw the truth, feebly and dimly, it may be. But there it was, in all its beauty, in all its simplicity and in all its radiance. They struggled for utterance. Keshub appeared on the scene. With his heaven-born eloquence, with his lips touched by the celestial fire, he pronounced the word, and gave passionate expression to their indistinct thoughts.

But Keshub Chunder Sen will appear in history not merely as the interpreter of a phase of national thought with which he was brought face to face. Ah no! His name will be associated with an age of religious and moral revival in his country's annals. It has been truly said that a great man is the product of his age, and that he is made by his age. But, in a larger and far truer sense, he makes the age and impresses upon it his genius and his character. So it was with Keshub Chunder Sen. He imparted an unusual impetus to the moral and social aspirations of his countrymen. The consciences of men had become dormant. Religious life was well-nigh extinct. The perception of right and wrong had become obtuse. Deep impenetrable gloom hovered over the moral atmosphere. Despair and dejection was pointed on every face. Men gazed at each other in blank despair. Keshub appeared, and with the magician's wand chased away the gloom, and from the depths of darkness and despair, there peeped forth the morning light of hope and righteousness. A great step was taken towards the moral regeneration of our countrymen. We hear in these days a great deal about political regeneration. But bear in mind that political regeneration is impossible of attainment without moral well-being, and that national greatness depends upon the awakening of the national conscience. If our people should ever become great, if Aryavarta should ever again become the abode of the good and the true, the result would, in no small degree, be due to the efforts of the Brahmo leader whose loss we now mourn.

There has been in recent years a considerable display of public spirit and of political feeling. I have no hesitation in saying that Keshub is in part the remote author of this change. For history teaches us the great truth that, when the spirit of inquiry has once been called forth into play in the field of religion, it is sure to vent itself in other spheres

of activity and to display its energies in matters relating to the government of the country. The reformation in England was but the signal for the establishment upon a broad basis of the unchangeable principles of English liberty. The religious awakening of the Sikh people, under the teachings of Guru Nanak, was the precursor of the political greatness of that noble race. I might muntiply instances. But it is unnecessary to do so. The great religious teacher is verily also the father of his people. But Keshub Chunder Sen was not only a great religious teacher, he was also a great social reformer, and he was, above all, the friend of women. For the education of women, he established colleges and schools. He fully recognised the truth that man's progress means woman's progress, and that no community can advance without the advancement of women. It were much to be wished that this truth were more largely appreciated and more keenly felt. It is not enough that there should be a mere intellectual belief. That we have already. What is needed is that we should be penetrated with a deep and abiding sense that a solemn duty is laid upon us to take along with us, in our onward intellectual march, the womanhood of our race. When there is this sense, and this feeling and when they lead to definite action, there will be a great step taken towards the intellectual and moral elevation of our people.

Such was Keshub Chunder Sen. Such were the services which he rendered to the community at large. We say nothing of his services to the particular church or the particular creed over which he presided. Such considerations lie outside the scope of a meeting of this kind. We are debarred from entering into the debatable ground of controversial religion. For my part, I know not whether the time has yet come for an impartial estimate of the worth of Keshub Chunder Sen. The impartial verdict of history is

not what is to be expected from the hands of contemporaries. It is the misfortune of great men that they are in advance of the age, in which they live. Contemporaries, dazzled and bewildered by the splendour of their genius, are often unable to appreciate their worth or to estimate aright the motives which inspire their conduct. But they shine out like radiant meteors shedding a flood of light upon the path of succeeding generations.

You are about to resolve to perpetuate in marble the worth of the great Brahmo leader. But whether you do so or not, he will adorn the imperishable pages of history with a lustre all his own. The most suitable monument that you could raise in honour of such a man would be to consecrate in your lives, and to assimilate into your evey-day existence the noble lessons of purity, of righteousness, and singleminded devotion to the highest interests of our country, which he taught, and for which he lived and died. Keshub is dead, but though dead, he rules with an empire far more complete and far more assured than any which he claimed or asserted, when living. The trumpet-notes of his voice shall be heard to the remotest ages. They will linger in the recollections of unborn generations, and lead them on to the achievement of their moral regeneration. Let us imitate the gentleness, the sweetness, and manliness of Keshub Chunder Sen, and then we shall have honoured his memory, fulfilled the objects of to-day's meeting, and prepared the way f[illegible]at moral regeneration of this vast Indian continent, upon which he had set his heart, and which, when perfected, will be the index and the guarantee of our social, and I venture to think also, of our political greatness.

NATIONAL FUND.

At a public meeting held at Babu Anuthnath Dey's Bazar, Simlah, Calcutta, on Wednesday the 27th July 1883, in rising to support the first resolution Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea spoke as follows:—

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to move the first resolution which is as follows:—

"That this meeting is of opinion that a National Fund should be raised, with a view to secure the political advancement of the country by means of constitutional agitation in India and England, and by other legitimate means, and that the other provinces be invited to join in the movement."

Gentlemen, before I proceed to offer any observations upon this resolution, you will permit me for a moment to recur to a thought which is uppermost in my mind, and to give expression to the deep and fervent sense of gratitude which overpowers me, at the present moment, for the warm sympathy I received in the hour of my distress from all classes and all sections of a great and united nation. I confess I never knew that I occupied such a place in the affections of my countrymen. I never knew that my humble services were viewed with such indulgent consideration by those, whose approbation, next to the approbation of my

own conscience I value as the highest reward of my public life. This expression of sympathy, deep and spontaneous, proceeding from the great heart of the nation, has filled me with an overpowering sense of gratitude, and I trust in God that it shall be the high privilege of my life to be able to devote my body and soul, to consecrate my energies, my time, my resources, my humble talents, my all to the service of my country; and the highest reward that I shall expect will be the consolation, vouchsafed to me in the supreme hour of my life, that I have not lived in vain, but that I have been of some service to the country of my birth. Gentlemen, I confess I have left prison under a solemn sense of responsibility; I feel, I scarcely know why, that every word that I shall now utter will be scanned with the utmost scrutiny, both by friends as well as by opponents—by friends, perhaps, with the best of motives; by opponents, I regret to say, with a view to bring discredit on that cause, which is so dear to every one of us. I feel, I may say, a great load of unredeemed duties pressing on me, and that load will continue to oppress me, until I have established, in part at least, my claim to that abounding sympathy, which I have received from all sections of this great Indian public. But perhaps I exaggerate. I arrogate to myself the homage which was paid to the principle which I feebly represented. The rights of conscience, the freedom of the press, the powers and prerogatives of the highest Court in the land—these were the burning questions which deeply stirred the national mind, and I was but the humble personage, around whom the battle of principles was fought, and hence probably I drew that sympathy, for which I am so truly grateful.

Gentlemen, I have many things to say in connection with the events that have recently taken place. I have, so to speak, a message to communicate to you, and I trust that you will bear with me for a few moments while I lay before

you some of those matters which have been pressing on my mind with painful interest for the last eight or ten days. Gentlemen, it is abundantly clear there has been a great outburst of feeling. It is impossible to doubt that circumstance. The nation has passed through a mighty convulsion, an unusual impetus has been communicated to the national mind, an impetus which, I trust, it will be possible for us to utilise for the highest purposes; and what we at present seek to do is simply to take advantage of this splendid opportunity which has presented itself to us, in order to lay the foundation of a great National Fund. Gentlemen, I may say that, in that explosion of feeling, there was no section of the community which was so violently agitated as the womanhood of our country. They held meetings, they recorded resolutions, they sent me letters of sympathy. I received as many as forty letters from them, and one gentleman who paid me a visit at the Presidency Jail, said that he did so, at the instance of his wife. I say this feeling should be consolidated, and strengthened for we know there is no impress which is so deep upon the mind of a man as that which a woman's hand lays upon it. And what is the means I would propose, the method which I would venture to suggest, for the consideration of this meeting? Well, gentlemen, I live in a village, and therefore I am to some extent able to gauge the influence which ladies working in a noble cause are sometimes able to exercise. There are Christian ladies in connection with Zenana Missions, and there is one such mission in the village where I live. I may truly say, speaking of this Mission, that it has shattered to pieces the fabric of Hindooism in the village, and has created a revolution in our domestic circles. The work of construction may not be so perfect; but the work of destruction is all but complete. Therefore, we have this fact clearly established, that European and

Eurasian ladies, although they are strangers to our language and strangers to our manners and customs, yet, when they become missionaries in a good cause, are able to effect a great revolution in our homes. Why should we not be able, taking advantage of this explosion of feeling, to organise female agencies to preach the cause of social reform and political advancement? I know there are difficulties in the way; but they do not seem to me to be insuperable. We have many advanced and educated ladies in Bengal at the present moment. Might we not utilise them for this grand, this noble and highly patriotic object, fraught with good to the country? Funds will be required; but even if one such agency is started, then, under the immutable law of growth, a hundred more will, in time, spring forth in different parts of Bengal. Our womanhood represent an unutilised source of power. They are there rotting, wasting away their energies. Why should we not utilise them for a purpose which will be so highly beneficial to the interests of the country? You are about to raise funds for constitutional agitation; but I hope they will be used for other purpose besides agitation, and this is one of those purposes.

Any body who looks around to see what is taking place now in the country cannot but be impressed with the solemnity of the situation. There are moments which constitute a crisis in the lifetime of a nation, and I verily believe such a time has now arrived in the history of our own country, and it is one of those times when the practice of moderation has become a virtue of the highest moment. I earnestly wish we should forget the past, and let by-gones be by-gones. I for my part, have no wish to carry on this war of recrimination which is likely to be attended with fatal results, so far as we are concerned. It is for the credit of the Supreme Government that I would ask you to practise

moderation. What is the charge brought against the Supreme Government, even by responsible leaders of the Opposition, by men in the position of Lord Salisbury? Why, they say Lord Ripon is directly responsible for the deplorable state of feeling between the European and Native communities. Gentlemen, is Lord Ripon responsible for this state of things? I say, no. (Loud cries of "no" and a voice, "Those rampant Armenians are"). I believe I re-echo the sentiments of all my countrymen, and I anticipate the judgment of history, when I say that there never was an Indian Viceroy more anxious to cultivate the good-will of all classes and to preserve harmony among them all than Lord Ripon. It is a calumny to say that Lord Ripon is responsible for this state of things. Who, then, are the people upon whose heads the responsibility must rest? They are truly responsible who threw the first stone, and who used the first harsh word in this unhappy controversy; but we will not recriminate, we will be moderate, and thus set a noble example. But, let those who calumniate Lord Ripon know our sentiments, and let these sentiments be re-echoed from town to town in the United Kingdom. I hope Lord Salisbury will take note of the expression of feeling which has proceeded from the press of this country, and which proceeds from public meetings held in this country. We ought, I say, to be moderate, and it is not a mere empty, barren sentiment which I would ask you to cultivate. There are strong pregnant reasons which I have to urge in support of this view. If we continued the war of recrimination—if we went on retaliating in rabid articles for every rabid article that appeared in the *Englishman* or other newspapers, why, there would be the amplest justification found for the passing of another Gagging Act. Such an Act would, in theory, be applicable to the European and Native section of the press alike, but in practice would be applicable to you, and you

alone. Therefore for the maintenance of our rights and for the preservation of the credit of the Government, it becomes our duty to practise moderation. Let us use judgment and discretion to tide over the crisis that has arisen. The resolution says that a fund is to be raised for the purpose of constitutional agitation. What, then, is constitutional agitation? What is it that we understand by the expression? By constitutional agitation, we mean agitation carried on within the limits of the law. We may hold public meetings to protest against the action of the Government. We may wait in deputations. We may send petitions. But we may do nothing which even remotely has the appearance of illegality about it. We take our stand upon the broad and unassailable basis of the law and constitution. There we stand, and there we intend to remain. We shall not permit ourselves to be dislodged from it, or be provoked into quitting it, and we shall discountenance all proceedings calculated even remotely to bring about a violation of the law. We venerate the law—we adore the principle of the law—we worship it— and we are anxious that the same feeling of veneration should be ingrained in the minds of our countrymen. But, gentlemen, there are those who say—"you are pestilential agitators, you do an immense amount of mischief. You are disloyal and seditious; you are silently but surely sapping the foundations of British power in India." Now, I put this question in all seriousness—Who are they who are really disloyal? Who are the men who are seditious and unfaithful to the Government of this country? Those who say ditto to every measure of Government, good, bad or indifferent; or men, like ourselves, who have the courage and manliness to speak out our minds. I again ask—who are the men that are disloyal to the Government? The supporters of Vernacular Press Acts and the opponents of Native Jurisdiction Bill, or men who can fight agai

the Vernacular Press Act, and who can support the Jurisdiction Bill? I will not go into personalities, or I could rake up names of men who are not worthy to be called loyal subjects or faithful citizens, who forget what is due to their country, who forget that it is to the advantage of the Government that the truth—the whole truth, the uncompromising truth—should always be told. We are not disloyal, opposition is not disloyalty; we are her Majesty's Opposition in this country—the responsible Opposition of her Majesty, and we are the more responsible, because here we are in a foreign country, the Government of which is unaided by representative institutions. Such a Government is likely to commit mistakes, and what does the agitator do? He points out to the Government the mistakes which it may commit. He warns the Government of the rocks ahead, and of the shoals and quicksands upon which the ship of State might be wrecked, at any moment. Are we disloyal, because we point out the mistakes of Government, or those sycophants who in season and out of season sing the praises of an erring administration? I wish to avoid personalities; but the truth must be told. At the present moment especially, our position is not one of opposition. On the contrary, it is a position of active sympathy and co-operation with the Government of India. Here the Government is straining every nerve to pass the Jurisdiction Bill. From one section of the native community, it has received the most lukewarm support. I am here in the temple of truth, and must tell the truth. From the whole of the middle-class community, it has met with the strongest support. The Ilbert Bill is a small thing in itself, but a great principle is involved in it. It is a test case to show whether the government of this country is to be carried on according to the principles of the *Englishman* and his party, or according to the declared wishes of the English Crown and the English Parliament.

It is this principle which has invested the Ilbert Bill with the importance it has assumed. I say, therefore, our position is not one of opposition. On the contrary, at the present momont, it is one of active sympathy and co-operation with the Supreme Government. I may just for one moment refer to a fact which will illustrate how important is the help which the Indian Association, has rendered to the Government at any rate, in the matter of local self-government. You are aware that the whole country thoroughly appreciates the advantages of local self-government. To whose efforts is the Government indebted for this consummation? It is to the efforts of the Indian Association that the Government is indebted for the lively sense of gratitude which the Local Self-government Bill has evoked throughout the country. The Association sent out agents, held meetings, and created an agitation which convinced the country of the blessings of Local Self-government.

Now, how is constitutional agitation to be carried on? I venture to lay down the following programme. We will say nothing immoderate, nothing indiscreet, but at the same time, we will not yield, until we have gained our point. We may lose to-day; we may lose the day after; but if our cause is based on justice and truth, it is bound to succeed in the long run. That is the code of the consititutional agitator. He never yields or submits. He is bound to triumph, because what he is fighting for is based on the unalterable principles of truth and morality. But what is to be the *modus operandi*? We must work by means of associations. Associations must be established throughout the length and breadth of the country. There must be a net-work of associations throughout the province. The Indian Association has already got many branches in many parts of India; but we want to have a branch in every district town, and every sub-divisional town. We

want to have the pleaders, the pillars of every public movement in this country to take part with us. They are not Government servants. They need not be afraid of losing Government patronage. They can stand upon their rights. In every country the bar has always fought most resolutely the battles of the country. I can not forget that Daniel O'Connell, the great Irish Liberator, was also the leader of the Bar, and Gratton and Flood were also both distinguished barristers. Let there be a thorough organisation of the legal element in the country. They well know how to drive a coach-and-four through an Act without getting into the toils of the law. But outside the ranks of lawyers, there are others whose help also is needed. There are the shop-keepers, and there are the peasants. The shop-keepers are independent men. Why should we not have their unions? Why should we not have also ryots' unions? Not long ago an English gentleman with whom I was speaking about different matters asked me in a somewhat contemptuous tone—"Where are your cohorts? You agitate about various questions, you write to the newspapers, you create a hubbub in the country. But where are the cohorts, where are your rank and file, who are to support you in the hour of trial?" The remark made a deep impression upon my mind, and I said;—"Let ten years pass, and I shall answer your question. I shall bring out the cohorts from the deep quagmire of ignorance and superstition, and send them forth on their high errand of patriotic duty." Yes we must educate the ryots, lift them from their present degraded condition to a higher level of moral and political existence. The Indian Association must take up the work of ryots' unions, must take up the work of shop-keepers' unions, must take up the work of women's organisation, and all these things must engage the serious attention of the Association. But money is needed, and therefore we

require a National Constitutional Fund to aid us in the work. And how are we to raise this money? I have a suggestion to make in this connection. How do the Wahabis raise their funds? I speak of the Wahabi reformers, and not the Wahabi rebels; so you need not be afraid. They do it in this way. Every householder puts by a handful of rice before he takes his meal, and these handfuls are all collected in the course of the week, and then they are taken to the mosque for the Wahabi missionary to come round and take them up. In this way a fund is raised for the maintenance of the Wahabi mission. Why should we not be able so to organise that by imposing the least possible amount of hardship, we might raise a large sum from the opulent people of Bengal? Why should we not be able to organise so that every village in Bengal might pay one rupee which should be collected from the *mundul* of the village? We should ask him—"Will you pay this amount to the National Fund? We know nothing about the villagers, but we know you the distinguished head of this village; will you pay us your rupee, and let us be gone?" If there are ten lakhs of villages; then instead of six lakhs, we should get ten lakhs of rupees, and we should not have caused the least hardship to any one. Well, now, what about the towns? Let us go to the mofussil towns first; and with reference to them, I would say, let us ask an anna from every householder. Mofussil people are not so rich as these gentlemen here, and they will not be able to pay a rupee per family. If you tried to get a rupee, they might come out with a big club, and pay you something which you did not bargain for. But every one can pay an anna; therefore, I say, let us have an organisation, such as I have suggested, for the mofussil. Now, we come to this great imperial town; it is a very large place to manage. There are 500,000

people in it, and each a John Stuart Mill on a small scale. Each man can act and think for himself, and if you go to any one of these gentlemen for a subscription, you must be prepared to answer all his questions. He will make a thousand suggestions, and after you have expressed your readiness to comply with them, he will perhaps pay you half a rupee! What I suggest is that a man should be appointed for each *parah* consisting of 50 or 60 houses. There is always one man who is the *dalapattee* of the *parah*, and we might engage his services, and, I think if we were able to form an organisation of this description, we should be able to raise at least one lakh of rupees from the town. Some people will say all this looks very well on paper, but where are your agents? Where are those who are to devote time and labour, who are to sweat and toil, and delve and die, if need be in this work? I ask—Are there not such men in this great gathering? Has not the present crisis brought to the front such men who are prepared to devote themselves with unflagging energy to the interest of their country? I see here six or seven thousand men—are there not to be found in this great gathering of my countrymen at least some fifty or sixty men who will do this work, and go about from *parah* to *parah* and make the *dalapatties* pay? If there are such men, will they not at once place themselves in communication with the Indian Association? And I may say work will be given to them, which will be productive of the greatest good to the country, and which will also be extremely agreeable to them. I venture to suggest this organisation, but I am afraid I have taken up too much of your time. Well, gentlemen, there is one part of the resolution which especially recommends itself to me, and which will strike a chord of sympathy in the other presidencies of India. It is that the other presidencies should be invited to join in this movement. I look upon

this as a message going from Bengal to the other Indian provinces, asking them to co-operate with us in a matter of national importance. The prospects of Indian regeneration must depend upon the co-operation of the different presidencies and provinces. Not long ago a newspaper editor published what purported to be a conversation on the part of a Sikh soldier, who was reported to have used the most contemptuous language, in reference to the natives of Bengal. I am inclined to think that the editor of that paper, after witnessing the grand and impressive demonstrations held lately in the Punjab, will come to the conclusion that his informant was mistaken, or that he had drawn pretty freely on his own imagination. There is indeed a strong bond of union between the educated natives in different parts of India, and was there ever a grander spectacle than that of which I was the humble centre, not long ago? I say that instead of two months' imprisonment, I would gladly welcome two years, if the result of it would be the consummation of Indian unity. The strongest sympathy exists between the different Indian races. A blow is aimed at high education in the Punjab, and Bombay and Bengal join in the protest.

Famine makes its appearance in Madras, and Bengal stretches forth a helping hand. Under British auspices, a distracted country, peopled by many races, bids fair to become the home of a great and united people. England has achieved many triumphs in history, but this will be the noblest of them all. It will throw in to the shade the memory of her proudest achievements. A year of Waterloo's will not equal it. I think, therefore, that the Indian Association is to be congratulated on sending forth this message to the other presidencies, asking them to join in this great movement. Gentlemen, I have only two or three things more to add. What is to be the object of this fund?

What are to be the purposes to which it is to be applied? Of course, it is needless to say that it is impossible for me to state specifically just yet all the objects of this Fund; but I may state in general terms what we mean to do. The main object, is to bring the Government of this country into harmony with national aspirations, and the declared wishes of the Crown and the English people. We want local self-government in perfection. We are anxious to have provincial self-government. We desire Parliamentary institutions. We desire, in short, to be placed on the same footing with the Colonial possessions of the Crown. They have the complete management of their internal affairs, subject to the protectorate of England. This is the goal which we hanker after. This represents the culmination of our efforts. God knows we are not sedition-mongers; we are loyal men; we are anxious to place broadbased the foundations of British rule in the hearts of her Indian people. I, for my part, regard British rule as providential, as one of the dispensations of the God of history. I am anxious for its permanence; and I have ventured to point out the conditions, upon which its permanence may be secured. The days of Government by physical force are indeed past and gone. A new *regime* has dawned. The empire of the moral forces is about to be established here, the supremacy of the moral laws is about to be recognised even in India; and Lord Ripon stands forth as the glorious apostle, as the representative of the new force, which for the first time has made its way into Indian administration. We desire that his name should descend to future generations as the originator of a new and beneficent epoch in our history. Above all, we desire the name of our mother, the Queen-Empress of India, to be associated in our minds and in the minds of our children's children with this noble inauguration of a beneficent policy. These are our hopes

and aspirations. It may perhaps be said that I am a dreamer. But the dreams of one age become the realities of the next. Dante sang of Italian unity 300 years before Italy became united. The German Professors taught the doctrine of the unity of the Fatherland at least a hundred years before the Fatherland became united. So will it be with this ideal which is based upon truth and liberty, and is consistent with the most perfect loyalty. Therefore the ideal will one day become a bright reality, to the glorification of England, and to the benefit of India. Gentlemen, how then is this money to be raised? Is it impossible to raise it? An English paper—which shall be nameless, because I am not willing to give offence—seems to think that Lord Ripon is the author of this agitation in connection with the National Fund. This newspaper editor argues that Lord Ripon's policy has created a violent convulsion of feeling, and that the National Fund is the product of this feeling. Therefore on the principle that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, Lord Ripon is the author of this agitation. But there is one unfortunate circumstance which makes this position wholly untenable. This is quite an old idea. There is not even the faintest appearance of novelty about it. This idea was put forward in 1879, before Lord Ripon came to this country. It was broached at a Town Hall Meeting held in the month of September, and I was the person who proposed the resolution, recommending it to the public. It is in effect an old idea, dressed in a new garb, and we are anxious to give it a trial this time, because our countrymen have shown during the last two months an unwonted capacity for self-sacrifice. Well, then, I ask is it possible to raise six lakhs of rupees? Let us for a moment observe what the Anglo-Indians have done. A community of a few hundred thousand men have raised in the course of a few months a

fund to the tune of one-and-a-quarter lakhs. We count our millions where they count their thousands, and we ought therefore to be able to raise at least ten times what the Anglo-Indians have raised. I meet with no favourable response. (Sudden applause.) That is more welcome. That I take to be an indication of a firm resolve on the part of this meeting to do every thing in its power for the creation of a National Fund. Our fathers raised temples to their gods and goddesses and spent thousands on their charities. Have we become degenerated under the influence of English education? (Cries of "No, no.") When we have money, what is it that we do? I shall be plain-spoken. We begin to read the *Indian Mirror* and to read the promissory-note account. We begin to think of investing the money in Government promissory-notes, or in houses, or the purchase of zemindaries? But the cause of the country, the care of the poor, works of piety,—these do not claim our attention.

This is deeply to be regretted. I hope the outburst of feeling lately displayed will show that we are at least as capable of self-sacrifice as our fathers were. You spend lakhs at the *Doorga Pooja* and other festivities. Let us have but a fraction of what you spend on these occasions. Let us appeal to the *Doorga Pooja*-makers and implore them to devote a part of their money to this National Fund. Let the *Doorga Pooja* go on till the day of doom, but let us have some help from the *Doorga Pooja*-makers and *Doorga* will be thrice blessed. Gentlemen, there has been a great ebullition of feeling. What is to be the memento of this outburst of national life? Posterity will read, not in the pages of the *Indian Mirror*, but perhaps in the pages of history, that on the 11th of may 1883 a meeting of 20,000 persons was held in this hall, and the grief was so great that they could not find language to express themselves. Then they will ask—What became of all this upheaval of national life? Did it vanish

away into thin air, or manifest itself in streams of wordy rhetoric? Will you allow that to be said? (Cries of "no, no.") Well, then, let us raise a monument to ourselves,—a monument which will guide and instruct posterity;—and what better monument can you raise than a National Fund? Gentlemen, when Bishop Latimer was being burnt at the stake, he said "Brother Ridley, this day we will kindle a fire in England which all the waters of the Thames will not be able to extinguish." Oh! let us kindle a fire on the alter of our country which all the waters of the Ganges will not be able to put out. Oh! let us feed the sacrificial flames till they reach the footsteps of the throne of the Supreme, and fill the land with beauty and splendour and glory? But where are our priests—those who, touched by the celestial fire, will feed the flames? Where are our beneficent workers—the propagators of the new faith? Let them gather round the banner of the Indian Association; let them disseminate the principles of the Association replete with national life; and then this darkness will disappear and the morning star of liberty, and peace, and righteousness will appear resplendent in the Indian firmament.

Let each one of us then contribute his mite in aid of this great fund. Let boys, young men and old men come forward with their contributions. I hope even the ladies of the zenana will contribute. I trust the sound of my voice will reach them. Let each one bring a stone to the national cairn; and a goodly edifice will spring up, full of joy, of hope, and of beauty.

CRIMINAL

PROCEDURE CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

A public meeting of the native inhabitants of Calcutta and its Suburbs was held at the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Monday, the 14th January, 1884, to take into consideration the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill. W. C. Banerjea, Esq., Barrister-at-Law was in the chair. The first resolution having been duly moved, seconded and supported, Raja Shama Sunkur Roy Bahadur moved the second resolution which was supported by Kumar Neelkrishna Bahadur. The resolution ran as follows :—

"That this meeting regrets that the decision arrived at by the Executive Council of the Government of India, with regard to the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill, adds to the already existing invidious distinctions recognised by law in the status of accused persons based upon considerations of race ; and that it is calculated to lead to administrative inconvenience and to failure of justice by reason of the limited number of the Anglo-Indian community in the mofussil, and also in some cases by reason of the fact that the District Magistrate is the only covenanted magisterial officer in the district, But, at the same time, this meeting feels it to be its duty to place on record its deep sense of gratitude to His Excellency the Viceroy for his noble vindication of the Proclamation of the Queen, and for his earnest and sincere desire to govern India for the benefit of its people."

In rising to support the resolution Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea spoke as follows :—

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to support the resolution which has been moved and seconded. But I feel, it is necessary for me to clear my ground. I am anxious to guard myself and the promoters of this meeting against the possibility of any misapprehen-

sion which the circumstances of the case might suggest. Let it not go forth from this great meeting of my countrymen that we are assembled to censure the Government of India or to condemn Lord Ripon. We have met here to take exception to a particular measure, but the man and his policy are entitled to our highest respect. I use the language of sober and deliberate truth when I say that we are living in a critical time, and that upon our conduct at the present moment, and perhaps at this meeting, will depend in a very material degree the decision of the question, as to whether the Government of India shall in future be conducted according to the principles professed by Lord Ripon, or according to those other principles, professed by Sir James Stephen and the men of his party. Political excitement is good in its way. Far be it from me to deprecate it. I trust that in the times that are coming, our countrymen will continue to take as great an interest in their political concerns as that which inspires them at the present moment. But let us not be so carried away by the wild and ungovernable impulse of political passion as to compromise the interests of our country, and to sacrifice to the excitement of the moment the plainest dictates of political wisdom. We condemn the *concordat*, none more emphatically than myself. We condemn its terms. But above all, we condemn the manner in which that settlement has been arrived at. Here was a great Government, entering into a secret pact with a body of irresponsible men, noted for their bitter attack of the Government, and who form, so to speak, the Jacobin Club of the East. That was unworthy of the Government. Such is our attitude with reference to the *concordat*. But our feelings towards Lord Ripon personally are those of deep gratitude for his noble vindication of the Proclamation of the Queen, and for his earnest and sincere desire to govern India for the benefit of its countless

millions. Who that heard him the other day, when the torrent of emotion nearly chocked his utterances, could leave the Council Chamber, without the conviction deeply impressed upon his mind, that though Lord Ripon might not be able to carry out all that he has promised, that though the measure of his performance might fall short of the measure of his promises and the measure of his intentions, yet in the arduous task of the government of this vast empire, he has been animated by the one sole, single-minded desire to add to the benefit of the people and the glory of British rule. What Viceroy in the face of official opposition would have ventured to appoint one of your own countrymen. though it be for a short time, to the high office of Chief Justice of Bengal, an office which is only inferior in point of dignity and status to that of the Commander-in-Chief of India and the Lieutenant-Governor of these provinces? From that day Lord Ripon lost caste with his countrymen. From that day he enthroned himself in the affections of the people of India. Such then is the attitude of this meeting with reference to Lord Ripon—an attitude which, I trust, reflects the cultivated sense of my educated countrymen throughout the empire. We condemn the *concordat.* And why? Because it accentuates those differences of race which it was the object of the Bill to remove. It is true the District Magistrate and the Sessions Judge, whether European or Native, shall claim and exercise the same jurisdiction over the European British subject. But how has this result been attained, how has this equality been established? By withdrawing, bit by bit, till the limits of a mathematical point have been fairly reached, the jurisdiction pertaining to these offices. The Magistrate of the District has ceased for all practical purposes to be a criminal officer. For the most paltry offence, it will be necessary for him to empanel a jury and to go through the elaborate

forms of a sessions trial; and curiously enough, the Joint-Magistrate, his subordinate in status and inferior to him in experience, may try a very considerable percentage of the self-same cases, without the aid of a jury. This is an anomaly. But it is not so much against these anomalies that we protest, as against those invidious race-distinctions which the *concordat* accentuates and emphasizes. The odium of race-distinction is shifted from a limited class of judges and is associated with the status of the accused of every grade and of every class. A European British subject when brought up for trial before a District Magistrate or a Sessions Judge may claim the right of trial by jury. A native of India may not. And why not? Because we are told the Englishman is instinctively attached to the jury system, and that he regards it, as the citadel of his liberty. But who ever has heard of Englishmen in their own country claiming a right of trial by jury even before a Magistrate? It will be said perhaps in reply that the Magistrate of the District has in fact been converted into a Sessions Judge, and that his punitive jurisdiction has been extended from three to six months' imprisonment. But how has this been brought about? By the curtailment of all independent jurisdiction. The Magistrate of the District cannot fine a man a rupee or send him to prison for a day without calling a jury to assist him. Is it not accentuating race distinctions by conferring the right of trial by jury upon European British subjects, but withholding it from our countrymen? I have been told that the extension of the jury system to the people of this country in the interior, on the lines of the Anglo-Indian concession, is a very large question. And so it is. But it seems to me that the extension of the jury system to the Anglo-Indian community in the mofussil is a much larger and more complicated question than the one relating to our own countrymen; for the simple reason that, in the mofussil, in consequence of the

limited number of the resident European population, it will not always be possible to find a jury; and this brings me to the question of administrative inconvenience. If it is not possible to find a jury in any district, the complainant, witnesses, and all persons connected with the prosecution will have to be shifted on like a foot-ball from one district to another, until, at last, a jury has been discovered. Is this adding to administrative convenience? Is it not seriously embarrassing the machinery of administration? But this is not all. I hold in my hand a paper which has been prepared by the kindly offices of a friend. It shows the districts, in which there are no covenanted Joint-Magistrates, and where the District Magistrate is the only covenanted magisterial officer. This paper is prepared from the Directory of 1883, and substantially it may be taken to be correct. We find that there are about ten districts in Bengal where there are no covenanted Joint-Magistrates, and in some of these districts, there is a considerable European population, as, for instance, in Julpigoree, where we have so many as 29 tea concerns; in Malda where there are about six silk concerns, in Khulna where a new railway has been opened. How will the system work in these districts? Why, in every case of assault committed by a European British subject, it will be necessary for the Distaict Magistrate to empanel a jury and to go through the tiresome forms of a sessions trial. Is this what is called adding to administrative convenience? At any rate, we natives of India look upon the matter in a different light. We consider the arrangement as involving the administrative machinery in hopeless embarrassment. But the greatest objection to the *concordat* has yet to be urged. And here we tread not upon the barren ground of sentiment, but deal with what affects the happiness and contentment of the people. It is one of the unspeakable blessings of British rule that it has ensured perfect security of life and property.

Throughout the broad dominions of the Queen, every subject of Her Majesty, from the highest to the humblest, enjoys perfect protection, as regards life and property. If then any law were introduced, or if any modification of any law were attempted, which would even remotely tend to confer immunity upon any privileged class, in respect of offences committed by that class, why it would be the duty of all subjects of Her Majesty to combine to protest against a result so deplorable. Now, it is apprehended that by the extension of the jury system to the Anglo-Indian community in the mofussil, our countrymen would be deprived of that protection under the law, to which they are entitled. The Anglo-Indian community in the mofussil form a small, and therefore a compact and sympathetic community. For a European British subject in the interior to be tried by a jury of his countrymen will practically amount to his being tried by a sympathetic body of friends : and in times of excitement, it is feared, the partiality of friendship will over-ride the sense of fairness of the Judge. I have no desire to rake up the embers of a dying controversy. Nor will it be for this meeting to reciprocate the wanton insult that has been so lavishly heaped upon us, within the last twelve months. But I ask in all truthfulness—I put the question to all impartial men, whatever might be their nationality, to whatever race they might belong—would the man Meares have been convicted by a jury of his own countrymen ? We know what followed upon his conviction. There was a violent outburst of indignation on the part of the Anglo-Indian community. The Magistrate who convicted the man was condemned ? The Chief Justice who affirmed the sentence was reviled ? The Lieutenant-Governor who refused a pardon was censured, and at length when the whole fabric of that agitation had melted away, the agitators, fortifying themselves with legal opinion, brandished it before the faces of those

whom they had vainly hoped to coerce into submission. But we have been told that the jury system is conferred upon the Anglo-Indian community, on the understanding that it shall not be converted into an instrument for the protection of offenders. We know not how it is possible to bring about such a result. But a suggestion comes to us from Bombay, made by a barrister of considerable eminence in that town, Mr. Mehta, which seems to me to be entitled to consideration. Mr. Mehta says that the complainant should have the right of appeal in case of acquittal. The appeal should not lie to the Executive Government, which will decide these things in a hole-and-corner fashion, but to a court of law, where the merits of the case will be discussed, and the free light of publicity will ensure the ends of justice.

But I have another objection to offer to the *concordat*. One of the objects of the original Ilbert Bill was to remove a hardship that pressed upon the native Covenanted Civilians. It was urged that by reason of the race disqualification, which curtailed their jurisdiction, they could not be appointed to the more eligible districts, where there was a considerable element of European population. Some of you must have read the letter of the Calcutta Correspondent to the *Times* newspaper in which, he cites the case of a native Civilian who could not be appointed at Dacca but had to be transferred elsewhere, because there was a considerable European population in the Dacca district. It is true the disqualification has been removed as regards the District Magistrate. But it remains as far as the native Joint-Magistrate is concerned. He will continue to be excluded from such districts as Dacca, Bankipore; and indeed there will now be a greater reason for this exclusion, as under the existing arrangements, the brunt of the criminal work will fall upon the Joint-Magistrate, who alone in the case of European British subjects will exercise summary jurisdiction.

Such are our objections to the *concordat.* We regret, deeply regret, that the Government should have agreed to this settlement. But do we wish that the Bill should be withdrawn ? I say, No. Let the amended Bill pass, with such safeguards as will prevent a failure of justice, and with the extension of the jury system to our countrymen. Under such circumstances, with these safeguards and with this concession, the *concordat* will come to be regarded as the first of a series of progressive reforms. These reforms will have to be perfected by us in the future, by the assiduous practice of those arts of constitutional agitation, which have saved many a country and which will yet save India. You have seen before you, and with your own eyes, the triumph of a great agitation. I would ask you to imitate the persistency and firmness of the Anglo-Indian agitators, discarding, of course, their bitterness and violence. The Ilbert Bill has indeed led to a rancorous controversy. But there is a bright side to the picture which is not to be overlooked. The Ilbert Bill has called forth an awakening of national life, unparalleled in the annals of this country. If we can utilize this feeling, deepen it, turn it into a salutary channel, an abundant harvest of good is promised to us and to our children's children, even unto remote generations. Be assured of this, that England, the august mother of free nations, is ever foremost in her sympathy with those, who are struggling for their rights. The same measure of sympathy will be extended to us, as has been extended to others, if we earnestly appeal to England. Let that appeal be made. Let the great voice of the nation be heard, and then will come the response from the English people, which, by abolishing race distinctions, and conferring on us, in full measure, the franchise of the British subject, will pave the way for the final and complete assimilation of India into the Empire of Britain.

THE

CIVIL SERVICE QUESTION

AND

THE NATIONAL FUND.

The follwing speech was delivered by Baboo Surendra Nath Banerjea at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Lahore, held at the Tribune Office, Lahore, on Sunday, the 8th May 1884, with a view to consider the Civil Service question and the desirability of raising subscriptions in aid of the National Fund. Sirdar Dyal Sing Majeetia was in the Chair.

GENTLEMEN,

I deem it a privilege to be allowed to take part in the proceedings of this meeting. Before, however, I address myself to the important questions you have been discussing, you will permit me to discharge a personal obligation. I have to express my sense of deep gratitude to the people of Lahore and indeed to my countrymen of the Punjub at large, for the tokens of sympathy which I received from them on a recent, and memorable occasion in my life. A demonstration, so universal and so spontaneous, has made a deep and abiding impression on my mind. I never knew that I occupied such a place in the affections of my countrymen or that my humble services were so highly valued by you. God willing, it shall be the aim and endeavour of my

life to prove myself worthy of your confidence and of that approbation which has been so lavishly bestowed upon me. I feel myself overpowered by a sense of unredeemed duties, and I shall deem myself fortunate, even if in part, I am able to do justice to them.

You have to-day adopted a resolution in favour of a memorial to the Secretary of State, praying that the maximum limit of age for the Open Competitive Examination should be raised to 21 years, and you have further appointed a Committee to raise subscriptions in aid of the National Fund. It is needless for me to say much in support of the first part of your proceedings. So far back as the year 1833, the Charter Act removed a great disability from natives of India, in respect of employment in public offices. The 87th Section of the Charter Act laid down that "no native of the said territories (meaning British India) nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disabled from holding any office under the East India Company." That was more than half a century ago, and since then these words have received a higher sanction and a more solemn ratification. On the first of November 1858, Her Gracious Majesty the Queen was pleased to assume the direct government of the country; and on that solemn and memorable occasion, Her Majesty issued a Proclamation. It was a declaration of the policy that was to guide the future government of the country. In that Proclamation our Gracious Sovereign announced; "it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to all offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge." Mark the circumstances connected with the announcement of this proclamation. The country had just then

passed through the horrors of a great Mutiny; the Queen had assumed the direct government of the Empire; and now for the first time, the personal relationship between sovereign and subject had been established. It was upon such an occasion that the Proclamation was issued, and her Majesty invoked the blessing of the Almighty God to bear witness to the solemnity of her plighted word. Has that solemn Proclamation been fulfilled, or does it remain the mere barren expression of a benevolent intention which has found but partial recognition in the actions of the Government of India? It will not be for me to say one word in disparagement of a document, so memorable and proceeding from an authority justly entitled to our highest veneration. But I will quote the words of a late viceroy of India. Lord Lytton in addressing the Convocation of the Calcutta University in 1876, declared that the Proclamation "yet remains inadequately redeemed." Some of the speakers, and especially my friend, Pundit Ramnarain, have dwelt with just emphasis upon the inefficiency to the Civil Service which the reduction in the limit of age is calculated to bring about. I would, however, prefer to take a higher and a more unassailable stand. I would appeal to the Proclamation and to that alone. I would confine myself to within the four corners of that memorable document. The Proclamation, the whole Proclamation, nothing but the Proclamation is to be our watchword, our battle-cry, the gospel of our political redemption. I would go up to the Secretary of State and I would tell him:—"You are the custodian of the honour of your Queen and of *our* Sovereign. Here is this reduction in the limit of age which interferes with the fulfilment of the Gracious Proclamation of Her Majesty and frustrates the benificent purposes of a noble policy. Will you allow such a rule to remain in force—will you not cancel it"? I am greatly mistaken if any Secretary of State, unless he

has ceased to be an Englishman can resist an appeal made in such a form and in such terms.

The Secretary of State in his reply to the deputation of the British Indian Committee observed that so many as twenty-eight natives of India had appeared at the Open Competitive Examination, since the reduction of the limit of age. I presume Lord Kimberley wants us to assume that the new rules have not interfered with the prospects of success, on the part of Indian candidates. Now it must be obvious to the meanest understanding—my young friends who are here in such large numbers know it to their cost—that it is one thing to appear at an examination and quite a different thing to pass it successfully. Twenty-eight candidates appeared, it is true. But how many passed? That is the crucial question. Only one passed—the glorious unit! Out of twenty-eight, only one passed, representing barely three per cent. of the candidates who appeared! But this is not all. Let us proceed a step further. I am anxious to make the demonstration mathematically complete. I will not allow the Secretary of State a loop-hole for escape. We have before us the fact that from 1876, when the rule reducing the limit of age came into force, up till 1883, only a single native of India out of twenty-eight has been successful in these examinations. Now let us take a corresponding number of years previous to the reduction of the limit of age. We find that from 1868 to 1875, fourteen natives of India appeared at the Open Competitive Examination, and out of that number so many as eleven passed or fully eighty per cent. We have therefore this fact clearly established that whereas previous to the reduction of the limit of age, during a given number of years fully eighty per cent. of the Indian candidates were successful. Since the reduction barely three per cent. have been successful. Is it possible to resist this conclusion or to support any

other? But I am prepared to go a step further. I am prepared to shew that if there has been this marked unsuccess, it has not been due to any want of interest on the part of our youthful countrymen, as regards the Civil Service Examinations. On the contrary, this interest has been steadily on the increase and in the face of difficulties which ought to have produced a very different result. For what are the facts? We find that whereas during the seven years preceding the reduction of the limit of age only fourteen candidates appeared, in the seven years following the reduction, the number had become twenty-eight or had just doubled itself. It thus appears that our youthful countrymen, notwithstanding the newly-created difficulties which lay in their way, went on manfully to the struggle, and if they did not succeed, they fell like martyrs,—the victims of an unjust regulation which had been made on purpose to exclude them from the Civil Service of their own country.

But the Secretary of State proceeded to tell the deputation, we presume, as some consolation to their disappointed feelings, that there was the Native Civil Service which included one-sixth of the appointments in the Covenanted Service and which was reserved exclusively for our countrymen. I do not wish to say a single harsh word about the Native Civil Service. But really there is a great difference in status between the European and the Native Civil Service. The admission to the one is regulated by a severe competitive test. The admission to the other is a mere matter of favour. Our rulers practically tell us;—"We Europeans must find admission into the service by the open door of competition and merit. You natives of the country must get in, as best you may by the back-door of favouritism." I believe I rightly interpret the feelings of our countrymen, when I say that we want fair play and no favour in this as indeed

in all other matters. Make the test as difficult and as severe as you like, but apply it with the most rigid fairness and with the strictest justice to natives and Europeans alike. So long as you do not do this, we shall never cease to complain, never cease to agitate. If our English rulers do not want us in the Civil Service, why don't they say so frankly and in a straight-forward manner? Why have recourse to this subterfuge, so unworthy of English statesmanship and of the English character? For after all, let it never be forgotten that the English Empire in India rests not so much upon physical force or upon military prowess as upon the respect we feel for the honour and the moral worth of the English people. Let no Secretary of State in mere wantonness immolate this great bulwark of British power in India. But we educated natives of India and especially the people of Bengal have been called seditious, disloyal, reeking with the spirit of rebellion. And this serious charge is brought against us, because foresooth, we complain, we agitate, we seek the redress of our just grievances. Let me ask—who are they that are truly loyal? Those who would perpetuate blunders in the administration and thus sap the very sources of the happiness and contentment of the people? Or those who would point out to Government its mistakes and the perils which it may encounter in the prosecution of an unwise policy? A foreign Government, such as ours is, without the blessings of representative institutions, specially stands in need of such warning. For such a Government it necessarily ignorant of the views and ideas of the people. With the best of intentions it may commit mistakes. It may blunder where it intends to reform. Is it loyal to flatter where we should expostulate? If by loyalty is meant base, degrading, crouching sycophancy, then I plead guilty to the charge. But I understand loyalty in a very different sense. I regard it as

one of the noblest feelings that can warm the breast of man. It is the homage which the wisdom of man pays to law, to order, to the genius of a well-regulated constitution. Am I to be told that we the people of this country are disloyal, who have never raised their little fingers against the foreign dynasties, who for a period of a thousand years and more governed the country and who often laid upon the people a burden grievous to be borne? Is such a thing as a popular revolt known in Indian History? When have the people risen against their rulers? In the dark days of the Indian Mutiny, our countrymen rallied round the British Government. As Lord Canning said in his letter to the Maharaja of Krishnuggur, if there were thousands who had rebelled, there were at least tens of thousands who supported the cause of law and order. Be that as it may, for my own part, I am free to declare that I regard English rule as one of the dispensations of the God of history. England is here to regenerate an ancient people, and to make India once again the home of a civilization even nobler than what had marked the dawn of her early history. To a Government with such a purpose, and with such a destiny, we cannot be unfaithful or disloyal.

I am very glad, gentlemen, that you are going up to the Secretary of State with a prayer for the raising of the maximum limit of age for the Civil Service of India. This was precisely what you had prayed for, not many years ago. You were not then successful; but you are resolved to renew the prayer. I congratulate you on your persistency in this matter. "Knock and it shall be opened" is a maxim which is not more true in religion than it is in politics. If we are unsuccessful the first time, let us renew the demand again and again, and if our cause is based upon justice, and if we are in earnest, victory must crown our efforts.

This leads me to the question of the National Fund—a grand universal Indian fund, for purposes of constitutional agitation. Let there be no misconception, as regards the character and the scope of this fund. Let it be understood that it is not to be employed with a view to embarrass the Government but rather to help it to fulfil its promises, and to perform its solemn duty by the people. It is not by any means a menace against the Government. It is to be used for the purposes of lawful, constitutional agitation. We may petition, we may complain, we may protest; but we do nothing, which, in the remotest degree, will have the semblance of illegality about it. The constitution we adore and we venerate. Armed with the forces of the constitution, we shall fight the battles of the country and we shall conquer. Now what is this national fund—upon what purposes is it to be used, and how is it to be used? Those are very legitimate questions and you may reasonably expect an answer from me. But I may with equal reason refuse to enter into their consideration. I am a Journalist and as such it is my duty to read the newspapers; and what do I find? I find that, with exceptions here and there, Bengal and Bombay, Madras and Upper India, demand, through their accredited organs, the creation of the National Fund. It is sufficient for me to know that there is this great national demand. I take my stand upon the basis of the national will. The nation wants the fund—great is the nation—let the will of the nation be done.

But this is not all. The creation of the Fund is dictated by the clearest considerations of political expediency. The times are out of joint, or else we should not have witnessed that bitterness of feeling, that strange alienation between the two races which a small measure of justice provoked. We should have rejoiced, if it were a passing cloud that cast its transient shadows upon relations that for the most part

were happy or genial. But that was not to be. It assumed a definite form and the semblance of permanence. A Defence Association was formed with objects avowedly hostile to your interests. One would have supposed that after its great victory over the Government the Association would retire from its chosen field of labour and rest upon its laurels. But the Association apparently is resolved to obtain fresh laurels. It has recently issued a manifesto, to the contents of which I would venture to solicit your attention. The manifesto claims on behalf of Europeans a class of appointments which had hitherto been exclusively reserved for the children of the soil. You are probably aware that there is a ruling of the Secretary of State which lays down that in certain departments all appointments carrying a salary of Rs. 200 per mensem and upwards shall be conferred upon natives of the country, and that there shall be no departure from this rule except with the sanction of the Secretary of State. This is a rule which, as you know, is more honoured in the breach than in the observance thereof. But even its theoretical acceptance is apparently disagreeable to the Defence Association. The Association calls itself the Defence Association, I presume, out of pure modesty, but really it is, essentially aggressive in its policy, and in its programme. I put it to you to say whether you will permit the ruin of your political interests to take place without a single effort to protect them, without a single effort to avert the blow? I do not exaggerate matters in the least, when I say that unless you have a Defence Fund of your own (a National Fund as I call it) you will not be able to cope with the organization, the resources and the influence of the Defence Association. If we had a National Fund last year, we should have seen a very different termination to the Ilbert Bill controversy. Politics is the science of opportunities. We must strike at the right moment, or we can never be sure of victory. Now

we must have funds to do so—a permanent fund from which we can always draw and upon which we can always fall back. Hence the necessity for the creation of the National Fund.

But this is not all. There are other reasons of a very weighty character which justify the creation of the National Fund. I think, I speak the unanimous sense of this meeting and of the bulk of my countrymen when I say that the present Government of India is one of the most honest and benevolent that we have ever had. It is not for me to anticipate the verdict of history, but if I am permitted to take a forecaste of things future, this I will say that when the present shall have vanished into the ever-receding past, when the animosities of the present hour shall have given place to the dominance of the historic judgment, then the fullest justice will be done to the statesmanship and philanthropy of the eminent nobleman who holds in his hands the destinies of the many millions of the people of India. Lord Ripon's reign marks the beginning of a new policy. It is coincident with a new departure in Indian history. But this policy has not yet taken firm root in Indian Administration. There are rocks ahead, upon which it might be stranded at any moment. The Conservative leaders are by no means friendly to the new policy. Lord Salisbury the other day in one of his addresses described Lord Ripon's policy "as sentimental." Now Lord Salisbury might any day become premier, and then perhaps an attempt would be made by this practical statesman, assisted by his colleagues, to upset that policy which he is pleased to call sentimental, but which has won the gratitude of the Indian people. Now I ask you to consider whether you are not bound by every consideration of common sense and of patriotic duty to prepare yourselves against the evil day which may come upon you, when perhaps you least expect it. The Conservative leaders have apparently abandoned

the traditional policy of their party which dictated the Proclamation. They will be assisted by the Defence Association with all their organization, and all their resources. Are we to have no fund of our own, no organization, no means of protecting our dearest political interests? We want nothing more than what is guaranteed to us by the Proclamation. But our rights under the Proclamation we must have, in spite of the Defence Association, in spite of the Conservative leaders. If so, the national fund is a necessity to enable us to fight in a lawful and constitutional manner the battles of our country. The Defence Association has raised its lakh and fifty thousand Rupees. Where is our fund to protect our interests and to secure our rights? Every one of us is anxious to lay by something for the benefit of himself and of his children. No one can object to such a thing. But beyond the circle of the family and of the near and the dear ones, there is the nation whose interests are undying and permanent. Will you do nothing for the benefit of the nation? Will you not lay by something out of your earnings for the sake of your countrymen?

I have heard it said as an argument against the National Fund that there are no common questions which affect the whole of India – that our questions are sectional and provincial and not national and imperial. I deny the proposition altogether. My countrymen of the Punjab, your grievances are our grievances, your wants are ours. When, not long ago, you were fighting the battle of high English education in the Punjab, you had all India at your back. When not many years ago, the shadows of grim famine befell the Madras Presidency, the cry of sympathy rose from all parts of India. At the present moment, the graduates of Upper India are energetically striving to find admission into the higher ranks of the public service of their province; and is it not true that all India is in earnest sympathy with their

aspirations and with their prayers? We all live under the same Government and the same institutions; we are brought up under the same influences; we speak but different dialects of the same common tongue. Who can separate brothers, united by common interests and by the tenderest ties of affection? But this is not all. I am prepared to point out a number of questions of national importance, to the satisfactory solution of which the National Fund may be applied.

You have considered the Civil Service question in relation to the matter of age. There is another aspect of the question which deserves consideration. There is really no reason why the Open Competitive Examination should not be held in this country? Greatly as I value a visit to England I ask is it essentially necessary for the purposes of the statesman or the administrator? Did Dinkar Rao, or Salar Jung or Madhav Rao pass any portion of their time in England, before they became famous as statesmen? Our rulers declare all appointments in the Civil Service as being open to competition. But the examination is held in London and nowhere else. Now I ask is it not unfair—is it not throwing very great difficulties in the way of our young men to oblige them to leave their country, upon the mere chance of passing a difficult competitive examination? It is melancholy to contrast India with other countries, such as for instance Java and Ceylon. Java, as you are aware, is under the Dutch who are credited with all kinds of wicked and tyrannical proceedings. But in Java and under the Dutch Government, half the appointments are competed for in the island. Take again the case of Ceylon—that fortunate island which flourishes under the colonial adminisration, and which has so many things to teach India. Here too a portion of the appointments is competed for, in the island. It has been reserved for the British Indian Government to present to the world the spectacle of a great

administration which obliges the ambitious youth of a subject race to expatriate themselves at a tender age and at a great sacrifice, for the boon forsooth of being permitted to serve their own country. "The thing will not be believed a hundred years hence" said a high officer of Government to me the other day. Englishmen reading the history of their country will find it difficult to understand how such an anomaly could exist in any part of their empire.

Take again the question of army expenditure. What is the numerical strength of the British Indian army. About 300,000 men. What is the cost of that army? About 17 crores of rupees or nearly one-third of the net revenue of the Empire. Now be pleased to follow me across mountains, seas and deserts, and for a moment fix your attention upon the grandest military empire in the world—the Empire of Germany. What is the numerical strength of the German army? One million of men. What is the cost of this army? 17 crores of rupees, precisely the same amount as our army of 300,000 men cost. We have, therefore before us this fact that the most efficient army in the world supporting the grandest military empire in Europe and numbering three times the British Indian army, is maintained at the same cost! We thus pay for our army three times what the subjects of the German empire pay for theirs. No doubt it is the proud privilege of the British subject to pay and to pay heavily in the shape of taxes. But the country is grievously over-burdened with taxation; and both Europeans and Natives should combine for a reduction in the military expenditure. This is one of the subjects which the National Fund might with advantage take up. It embraces the interests of every class of the community.

Take again the question of representative government for India. Representative government for India! Why, many will regard it as a dream, an utopea, the phantom of

an excited imagination. But the dreams of one age become the realities of the next. Those dreams of political greatness which we are accustomed to indulge in and which appear before the mind's eye and pass away like the fleeting *mirage* of the desert, are ideals which after-generations will strive after and endeavour to attain to. The seeds of truth sown in the most uncongenial soil produce an abundant harvest. ' Eighteen hundred years ago, the inspired prophet of Nazareth murmured forth in feeble and tremulous accents the saving truths of his religion. He was harassed, persecuted, treated with scorn and contumely and at last crucified. Eighteen hundred years have rolled away and the religion of Christ has now been accepted by the most advanced portion of the human race, and it has softened their hearts and has tempered their civilization. Thirteen hundred years ago, the prophet of Arabia, flying from the knife of hireling assasins, proclaimed the principles of monotheism. No one would believe him, no one would accept his heaven-sent mission, save the devoted Khadija and the beloved Ali. But he persevered, went on with his glorious work; and before Mahomed was gathered to his fathers, one half of Asia had acknowledged him as the prophet of God and the teacher of a heavenly religion. I fully believe that our feeble aspirations regarding representative government will one day become a cherished reality which, while it would add to the benefit of the people will also contribute to the consolidation of British rule.

Gentlemen, there is another feature of the National Fund movement which, in my humble judgment, should recommend it to the universal acceptance of our countrymen, whatever may be their race or creed. It is the grand movement for the unification of the Indian races, I am not giving expression to a platitude. Every man who will subscribe will have a right to vote ; will be, in short, a unit in a

grand, national organization. The organization will be animated by a common life by a common purpose and by kindred hopes and aspirations.

Now I ask you is it possible for you to withhold your sympathies from such a movement? When its success has been assured, it will be the worthy monument of your patriotism. We want six lakhs of rupees, not exactly from this meeting, though I should be glad to have it. Is it so very difficult to raise this money? We are here in India two hundred and fifty millions of people. If each one of us were to pay a cowri, why we could raise not six but six times six lakhs of rupees. Why should not this be done, and what is there to prevent an organization being formed which will bring about such result? In lower Bengal, the devout Wahabi lays aside a handful of rice from his morning meal for the benefit of his missionaries. The devout Hindoo consecrates his first fruits by offering them to the god of his sires. Have we become so degenerated, so degraded through the influences of education that we are incapable of the smallest measure of self-sacrifice? We spend thousands and tens of thousands every year upon nautches, festivities and musical entertainments. But are we dead to all feelings of patriotism and to the commonest duties of the citizen? We have had enough of these entertainments. Oh! let us not hold high carnival over the prostrate remains of a fallen country.

From you my countrymen of the Punjab, we expect, substantial help in this matter. Punjab is the primitive home of the Aryan people. Here were enacted some of the grandest events in our history. Here flourished the conscript fathers of our race. Here were developed that noble language and that immortal literature which even now excite the admiration of modern Europe. Here on the margin of its sacred streams, beneath the vaulted canopy of heaven, our vedic

fathers chaunted those hymns which for beauty, pathos and sublimity remain unsurpassed among the productions of the human mind. The ground which we tread is holy, consecrated by the dust of immortal sires; the air which we breathe is sanctified by the breath of ancient India. Methinks we are moving among the departed spirits of the great past. Here, more than in any other part of India, the call to duty comes home to our minds with irresistible power. But great as is the past, the Punjab has also been great in times compassed by the recollections of the modern historian. Less than three hundred years ago, the illustrious founder of Sikhism, the meek and gentle Nanak proclaimed the worth of your province. Oh! let us prove ourselves worthy of the past and of the noble examples with which the annals of modern Punjab abound? We are living in stirring times. The marriage of the east and the west is about to be consummated. The birth of a new epoch has been heralded. A new India is springing forth into life. The epoch carries with it its responsibilities, and heavy are those responsibilities. I will not enlarge upon them. But the genius of the place points to a moral and teaches a lesson. Nanak preached the principle of Indian unity. Standing in the presence of his great example and on the soil which gave him birth, let me emphasize his lessons and proclaim his principles. Let all past jealousies and dissensions, let all bitterness and hatred kindled by differences of religion or race, be forgotten—let us realize the fact that whether Hindoos or Mussulmans, Parsees or Sikhs, we are all natives of India, having the same common interests to maintain and the same common sacrifices to make. Let there be a practical recognition of the principles of Nanak here and elsewhere—let there be established throughout the country the utmost sympathy, the most cordial relations between the varied races and nationalities, then not only will the National Fund have

become a reality, but the cause of Indian progress will have received an impetus, from which the most beneficent results my be expected.

THE BENGAL GOVERNMENT

AND

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPALITY.

At a Meeting of the Municipal Commissioners of the Town of Calcutta held at the Town Hall, on Thursday the 31st August 1884, to consider a letter of the Bengal Government proposing to appoint a Commission to enquire into the sanitary administration of the Town, Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea moved the second resolution which ran as follows :—

"That this Meeting deeply regrets the action taken by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in censuring the Commissioners of the Town of Calcutta, especially upon an *exparte* statement contained in a memorial submitted to his Honour, and without giving them an opportunity of being heard, and this Meeting records its respectful but firm protest against the one-sided manner in which the Commissioners have been condemned for their sanitary administration of the town."

In moving the Resolution, Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

Before I address myself to this Resolution, you will allow me to express my sense of astonishment, which verged indeed upon something like bewilderment, as I listened to the speech of Mr. Buckland and that of Mr. Abdur Rahman.

I can understand Mr. Buckland making a speech of that description; the thing is perfectly intelligible; we have only to appeal to his own standard of what the duties of a nominee of the Government are. Not long ago in this Corporation, where nominees and elected Commissioners are accustomed to do their duty by the rate-payers and the Government in a harmonious and conscientious manner. Mr. Buckland proceeded to enunciate the amazing proposition that it is the duty of the nominee of the Government to support that Government through good report and evil report, and it does infinite credit to this Corporation that the statement was repudiated by those whom the Government has honoured by inviting them to sit at this board. But when I come to consider the speech of my friend, Mr. Abdur Rahman, I can scarcely repress my sense of astonishment. (*A voice*, more than astonishment.) Mr. Abdur Rahman belongs to a noble profession—the profession of the Bar—that noble profession which in times of difficulty and danger has stood forth as the champion of municipal freedom and of constitutional rights. I am more than surprised that a gentleman belonging to such a profession should be forgetful of its traditions, and ask us to submit tamely to insults and unconstitutional usage at the hands of the Government. I trust that from some of the gentlemen who are members of the Bar, and who are members of this Corporation, there will come an emphatic repudiation which will indicate the sense of that noble profession in respect to the action of the Government of Bengal. Gentlemen, we have been told that the Government need not confine itself to within the four corners of the Act. Am I to understand that we live in an age of anarchy—that the reign of law has come to an end under British rule? Our rights, the rights of this Corporation, have been secured to us in language as explicit as the resources of the English

language can supply. And yet Mr. Buckland would tell us that this Act is of no avail, that the Government may go behind the Act, behind the Constitution, and claim unheard-of privileges. I have never before heard doctrines so astounding, publicly avowed by a responsible officer of the Government. I trust that from other members of the civil service who are members of this Corporation, there will come a repudiation, emphatic and unequivocal, of this astounding doctrine. We live in a reign of law, where the constitution guards our privileges, and the Government dares not act except according to the lines of the law. The Government itself says in the most express terms that this Commission which it is proposed to appoint is a commission that is not warranted by the law. But the Government is very considerate. It has been very kind and forbearing! How has it been considerate? It has condemned us unheard, and threatened us with pains and penalties, unless we submit to its arbitrary demands! The Government practically tells us this—"Here is a Commission we propose to appoint, submit to it. If you do not, there is Section 28 looming in the distance, and the thunders of that section will overwhelm you?" I ask, is not this an unworthy threat on the part of the Government? I ask, is it not most improper to hold this section over us *in terrorem*? Would it not have been a more proper proceeding for the Government to have proceeded under section 28 not exactly in the way suggested by Mr. Sykes, but to have called from us an explanation, and then to have done what it thought best under the circumstances? But we protest against this illegal, arbitrary, unconstitutional, and unheard-of interference on the part of the Government with the constitutional rights of this Municipality. Sir, with censure we are familiar. Sir Ashley Eden used to censure us from year to year, and we thought nothing of the matter, because we

knew what the professions and the principles of the man were. He regarded representative institutions as a sickly plant in their own native soil. How much more uncongenial were they in the soil of India. But Mr. Rivers Thompson, from the first moment that he assumed the reins of government, stood as the champion of Local Self-Government and as the accredited lieutenant of his great chief, whose mission it was to introduce the principles of Local Self-Government into this country. How keen therefore is our regret, how bitter our disappointment, to find that we are condemned by such a Governor; and, not only condemned but condemned unheard, and threatened with extreme perils, unless we submit to his demands! The veriest criminal caught with his hands reeking with the blood of his innocent victim, and convicted after the most elaborate trial, is asked before sentence is pronounced upon him, whether he has any thing to say in his defence. This mark of justice is extended to the most heinous offender, but it has not been shown to us, the chief representative body in the country, by the apostle of Local Self-Government. Is our case so desperately bad that to ask us for an explanation would be to waste time? That seems to have been the opinion of Mr. Buckland; but I can assure him by the crushing weight of the logic of facts that we have an answer so irresistible and conclusive that the Government of Bengal, after it has received it, will not venture to go further. My friend, Babu Kally Nath Mitter, will enter into those considerations, but let me give Mr. Buckland a foretaste of them. It has been said that we budgeted only Rs. 1,10,000—and we are asked "why we did not budget Rs. 1,50,000?" If that question had been put to me, I would say, "It is our pleasure; we are responsible to the rate-payers; we are the guardians of the city, and we have budgeted that sum because we have thought it to be a sum ample." But we have a further answer.

We budgeted it on the understanding, in which I can be borne out, that in case more funds were wanted we should be willing to give them; and it is a fact that the Town Council and the Corporation have been only too willing to help the Chairman when he asked for funds. Then it is asked why it is that year after year we have spent only Rs. 88,000, and no more? What is the explanation? The Government is directly responsible for this result. We have to acquire land, but who is to do it for us? Now I, learn at this meeting that for the last five months the Collectorate has not made over to us the land we wanted. The Government officials are responsible, but we who are elected by the people are blamed. Then, Sir, there is another consideration which has to be borne in mind. A sum of Rs. 70,000, remained unexpended. Well, that was not expended owing, I believe, to the same circumstance. The Deputy Collector died unfortunately, and there was no one to acquire the land for us, and consequently we could not spend the money. And although there were all these impediments in our way, the Government will not take notice of them, but is only too eager to censure us. Does not Mr. Buckland regard the foretaste of this explanation as something to be brought into the opposite scale in favour of the Municipality? The case is really not so desperate. Look at the facts and figures again upon which the memorialists take their stand. They rely upon the death-rate of March and April, arising chiefly from cholera. Now everybody knows that cholera, by its suddenness, and the havoc it creates, has about it all the characteristics of a great visitation of Providence. What doctor can control the tidal wave of cholera as it rolls along, decimating thousands? France at the present moment is the seat of that terrible scourge. Toulon and Marseilles have been attacked, and does the French Government propose to disenfranchise the municipalities of

those towns? Is there not an explanation forthcoming? But we have something more to urge. Mark the month in which cholera broke out in its utmost virulence. It was the closing days of the exhibition in March. A large influx of people from all parts of the empire had come into Calcutta, and this must partially account for the prevalence of the disease. And then there was an abnormal want of rain;—what, Government or municipality can control the rain, 'or wind, or weather? The Municipality is not to blame. The memorialists have neither facts, arguments, nor evidence. But what they want in argument they make up for by the virulence of their attack, and by the unmeasured denunciations in which they indulge. One of the chief movers against the Corporation is a Judge of the High Court, but his ermine will not protect him. His judicial office will not avail him. Now that he has entered the arena as a combatant, he must give and take. Mr. Justice Cunningham tells us that the Corporation is a scandalous satire upon Local Self-Government. The memorialists tell us that we have not an adequate sense of our responsibilities. Language such as this has been applied to the Corporation, but not a word of rebuke was passed by the Government of Bengal in referring to it. If the Collector of a district had been spoken of in this way, would not the Government have returned that memorial as impertinent and improper? But the Government practically endorses the insult by seeking to give effect to the memorial. I do not wish to be harsh upon Mr. Justice Cunningham, but what would he think if somebody were to tell him that from day to day he enacts a satire in the highest Court of the land? What would his feelings be, if in spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that statement were persevered in. I am sorry, he should have provoked the remark, but I give him distinctly to understand that when a judge lays aside his ermine and the calm dignity

of his judicial office and mixes himself up in political affairs, he has no right to expect more consideration than any other combatant. I do not wish to be harsh, but it is necessary to know something of the sponsors of this movement in order to judge of the movement itself, and I will invite an Anglo-Indian writer to give his testimony in reference to this matter. He says ;—Mr. Justice Cunningham is a Barrister Judge, and he is a phenomenon among Barrister Judges ; his knowledge of law and notions of justice are equally exceptional ; he fills a post for which nature does not appear to have designed him, nor his education qualified him. (A member :—That is out of place here). Yes, but when we are told we are a satire upon Local Self-Government, we have every right to retort. I think Mr. Cunningham would do better by giving more attention to the clearing off of that unhappy block which hampers business in the High Court than mixing himself up in these political matters. In reading over the list of names attached to this memorial, it is with very great regret that I find the names there of High Court Judges. The Judges are entitled to our highest consideration ; they are the guardians of the law ; the protectors of our lives and property ; they ought, however, to steer clear of political controversies. They are not allowed a seat in the House of Commons, and I think some such law ought to be enacted here. Well, Sir, so much about Mr. Justice Cunningham. It is now necessary to say something about Dr. Payne, the gentleman who next to Mr. Cunningham occupies the foremost place in this movement. Dr. Payne was our Health Officer, but he is now Surgeon-General of Bengal. As Health Officer he was twice censured by this Municipality and his pay was cut down from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 700. I can only express the hope that in this agitation he is not animated by personal feeling or a sense of personal wrong.

Now, Sir, the next matter to which I would call your attention is the manner in which these signatures have been obtained, because they will decide to some extent the value to be attached to the memorial. At the public meeting held the other day, a gentleman read a letter to the chairman in which the writer said that he had signed the memorial under the impression that it was the Commissioners who were to appoint the Commission. Another gentleman spoke to the same effect, and now we have the testimony of an English paper as to the way in which the signatures were obtained. It appears from the *Statesman* newspaper that the Venerable Archdeacon Atlay interested himself in this matter. He could not go about himself, so they fixed upon an elderly Deputy Collector, who having spare time on his hands and not knowing how to use it thought it could not be better employed than in seeking to injure this Corporation. So Mr. Heysham became a touter for signatures. He goes to the Accountant-General's office and there the signature of the Accountant-General is obtained. The Deputy signs after him, the staff follows, and the whole office does likewise as a matter of course, and so on from office to office the career of conquest proceeds. These are facts capable of proof. Then the memorial was sent to Mr. Belchambers, and with the authority which he undoubtedly possesses, he obtained more than 100 signatures. Of course everybody was willing to oblige Mr. Belchambers, and thus it was, all his clerks signed—and most of them reside in Bhowanipur. How they became rate-payers of Calcutta it is difficult to say. Such then is the nature of the document, such are the prime movers and such is the manner in which the signatures were obtained. It is fitting, therefore, that the Corporation should record its protest against it. Of course it is a very great honour to be allowed to represent our countrymen at this Municipal Board—it is a much

coveted honour. But there is one thing which we are not prepared to do at the bidding of the rate-payers, or even at the bidding of the Government, namely to sacrifice our sense of self-respect. To protect the wounded dignity of the Corporation, to guard its inviolable rights and to prevent the repetition of insults of this kind, I invite you to enter a respectful, but at the same time a firm protest against the action of the Government of Bengal. With these remarks I beg to move the resolution I have read.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.



At a public Meeting of the Native inhabitants of Calcutta and its Suburbs held at the Town Hall, on Saturday the 18th February 1882, to take into consideration the question of local self-government, Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea moved the third resolution which ran as follows :—

"That this Meeting feels deeply grateful to His Excellency the Viceroy for his recent resolution, which seeks to confer upon the people of this country the inestimable boon of Local Self-Government, and ventures to express its earnest and confident hope that the measures adopted by his Excellency for the purpose will be of such a character as to secure a fair and satisfactory working of the scheme. And with this view this meeting would respectfully beg to make the following representations :—(1) That the constitution of the Local Boards and of the Municipalities should be based on the elective system. (2) That their Chairman should be an officer elected by them, and on no account be the Magistrate-Collector of the District. (3) That the functions and powers vested in the existing Committees should be increased in view of their amalgamation in the proposed Local Boards."

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Some two years ago, when I had the honour of addressing a large audience of my countrymen, assembled in this very hall, under the auspices of the self-same Association, to express our congratulations on the accession of the Liberals to power, and on the great triumph which they had obtained over their

political opponents, I had ventured to remark that the question of self-government was looming in the not far-off distance, and that perhaps to the Liberal party would belong the credit and glory of finding a solution that would satisfy the aspirations of the nation, and at the same time meet the requirements of imperial rule. In my wildest dreams, in my most sanguine moments, I could scarcely bring myself to hope that my anticipations were so soon to be realised, and that what was merely an aspiration, feebly and tremulously uttered though vigorously felt, was so soon to become a great reality, that would in all probability change, and that within a short time, the whole course of Indian administration, and mark a memorial epoch in the history of our country. But so it has been willed by an over-ruling Providence, who is leading our country by steps, sure and slow, by the workings of His inscrutable wisdom to that goal when in the fulness of time she will take her place among the nations of the earth, the arbiter of her own destinies, subject to no other control save that which conscience and common sense may impose, or what England, our imperial mistress, may think fit to dictate. The dream has become a reality. From the depths of despondency and despair, the light of hope has peeped forth. The long black night of anxious suspense and wearisome travail is past and gone, and the sun of hope has risen on the firmament. The era of repression is about to disappear—that of Self-Government is about to commence. Centralisation is in its last gasp. Absolutism dies an unnatural death, throttled not by its natural executioners, the people, but by the respected head of the Indian Government, to whom it is impossible to refer at any meeting of our countrymen, without expressing towards him our sentiments of deep and heartfelt gratitude. The Resolution speaks of the inestimable boon of Local Self-Government. It will, indeed, be

an inestimable boon, if you are invested not merely with the semblance, but with the reality of Self-Government; if you do not allow yourselves to be deluded by a mere shadow, but have placed within your reach the reality of power. Self-Government is the noblest school for the development of the highest faculties of the human mind. What is it that has made England what she is? Is it her vast colonial possessions? Is it the extent of her ever-spreading empire, upon which, it is said, the sun never sets? Is it her army? Is it her navy? Is it even those wonderful commercial operations that extend from pole to pole? Ah, no! It is not these that have made England what she is, the pride and glory among men. It is rather that wonderful fabric of liberty which Englishmen have raised for themselves, and which constitutes their distinction and their title to the lasting gratitude of men. The institutions of England furnish a noble field for the exercise of the art of Self-Government. Here is the training-ground for the English people. Here are developed those energies and that talent and genius which have made Englishmen rulers of half the habitable globe. Have we anything in our institutions approaching to this? We are accustomed to talk big of our educational system. Loud are the expressions of congratulation that escape from the lips of our orators and patriots, when they begin to descant upon the achievements of our rulers in the field of education. But let me ask, what is your education worth, when it has not received its finishing-touch in the practical school of public life, where your talents and energies have not been developed by the responsibilities of high official position? It was not in this way that our late Moslem rulers sought to conciliate the affections of an alien people, over whom they ruled for more than 800 years. The scions of the noble families whom Akbar conquered became the commanders of Mogul armies,

the rulers of Mogul provinces, the trusted advisers of the Mogul sovereign. And they repaid the kindness of their rulers with fervent gratitude. Man Singh, of the conquered house of Jeypur, carried the Mogul standard from the borders of Assam on the East to the frontiers of Cabul on the West. In those days of trouble and tribulation which cast their shadows on the declining years of Shah Jehan's reign, Jesswant Singh alone of the more considerable members of the Mogul aristocracy remained true to the throne and the sovereign whom he had served. Of course, it is idle to expect that our Christian rulers will learn from the example of heathen barbarians. Pledges are good things in their way, but self-interest is better. At any rate, it is much more pleasant to listen to the dulcet notes of that powerful impulse in the breast of man. There is, however, now to be a departure from the traditional policy of the Indian Government. A new landmark now appears, for the first time in Indian history. Before, however, I address myself to the Resolution of the Government of India, it becomes necessary that I should clear my ground. It is urged by many, and even by persons in authority, that we are unfit for Self-Government, and Lord Ripon is represented as forcing upon the country a measure for which it is not yet ripe. Are we then unfit for Self-Government? Let me ask, were the Romans more fit for Self-Government in the days of the Republic, or were the English people more fit at the time of Simon-de-Monfort, or even in the days of the Tudors? Let it not be forgotten that in primitive times, when the ancestors of the present European nations were roaming the forests as painted savages, our fathers were managing their own affairs in those village communities, the memory of which has not yet died out from the pages of history. Am I then to understand that, after having been for more than a century under British rule—after having lived for so long a period under

the beneficent influences of English civilization, we have become so far degraded and degenerated that we are unable to appreciate the principles or to practise the art of Self-Government? This is the inevitable conclusion to which the assumption leads, and it is on the face of it so absurd that I shall dismiss it without further consideration. But practically the question of our fitness for Self-Government has been set at rest by the decision of His Excellency the Viceroy, who, by his recent Resolution, has declared that it is his purpose to confer upon our countrymen the right to manage their own local concerns. I think, ladies and gentlemen, I speak the unanimous sense of this meeting, and of the native community at large, when I say that to Lord Ripon is due our deep and heartfelt gratitude for the great concession which he proposes to make. I believe, I only anticipate the verdict of history when I say that if Lord Ripon fulfils the promises of the early years of his administration, he will take his place amongst the most illustrious of his predecessors, by the side of the Metcalfes, the Bentincks and the Cannings, of Indian history. When two years ago Lord Ripon landed in Bombay, he said that he wished to be judged by his works. We desire no better test. We shall indeed judge him by his works. It is yet perhaps too early to form such a judgment, but this we may say, that his Lordship has begun well, and that we wish him god-speed in his noble mission.

Lord Ripon in his Resolution proposes that all the existing committees should be amalgamated into one, with the Magistrate-Collector as Chairman, and that certain heads of provincial expenditure, viz., Provincial and Public works, Education and Sanitation should be made over to local management. At least two-thirds of the members should consist of non-official and the Municipalities should be relieved of all expenditure incurred for the maintenance

of the Police. It is upon these out-lines the Local Governments have been called upon to submit schemes of legislation. The Bengal Government, with praise-worthy promptitude, has invited the opinion of Divisional Commissioners in a circular letter to which I am anxious to draw the attention of this meeting, for that Resolution expresses the views, as yet perhaps crude and immature of the Government of Sir Ashley Eden. The circular letter starts with an admission. We are all told that the existing committees are inefficient. If so, the question naturally arises—Has the truth now for the first time dawned upon the mind of His Honour? If not, what was His Honour doing all this time? Why were no steps taken to remedy this state of things, which was not by any means creditable to the Government? It would be interesting to know what reply the Government has to make. But let us proceed. The letter makes no reference to the existing Road Cess Committees. Possibly this may be only an accidental omission. The letter says that the control of the Public Works Cess, the Government must retain in its own hands. It is a question as to whether the Dawk-cess should be managed by Government, or be made over to local control. The Lunatic Asylums must also be under the authority of Government. The Government must also superintend the working of the provisions of the Vaccination Act. It is, however, proposed to confirm and extend the powers of the Education Committees; the administration of the grant-in-aid allotment is to be made over to them. It will be seen that the Lieutenant-Governor proposes to make over but a small modicum of authority to the Local Boards; at the same time, His Honour is of opinion that it would be a distinct gain to the Local Boards to have on them the chief executive authorities of the district. Not a word is said in the whole of this letter regarding the elective system.

Is the omission accidental or is it wilful? I am inclined to think that the omission is wilful. Sir Ashley Eden is the sworn, the determined, the irreconcileable enemy of representative institutions. Not many years ago he said that representative institutions were a sickly plant in their own native soil, and they were wholly out of place in a country like India. We have not yet forgotten the anathemas which from year to year used to be hurled against what was at that time believed to be the doomed Corporation of Calcutta. If, then, all reference to the elective system has been omitted on the ground that Sir Ashley Eden does not favour the introduction of the system in the constitution of the Local Boards, we protest against this omission with all the emphasis that we can command. The adoption of the elective system, I say, is essential to the success of the great experiment which is about to be tried. Who is it that will practically nominate members to the District Boards? Magistrate-Collectors undoubtedly. But the Magistrate-Collector must necessarily choose from a limited circle,—he cannot know every body in the district, whereas the people must necessarily have a wider field to choose from, and they would be better able than any foreign official to select the men who would be best fitted to serve them. Then, again, is it possible to expect anything like independence from the nominees of the Magistrate-Collector? Being nominated by the Magistrate, they cannot be expected to vote against him. Not long ago I heard a very funny story which fully confirms the proposition I am trying to establish. A gentleman who shall be nameless called, with a certain friend, upon the Vice-chairman of a great Municipality, and requested him to put his friend on the commission. What, do you think was the reply of the Vice-chairman? "I can't nominate, because your friend will vote against me." The gentleman who was quite equal to the occasion

observed that "he would undertake that his friend would always vote for the Vice-chairman" "Well, if you can guarantee that," observed the Vice-Chairman, "there is an end of the difficulty, and your friend shall be nominated." Now, I ask is it possible for any one who sits on the Municipal Board, with a condition such as the one I have referred to, to show the least feeling of independence in the performance of his responsible duties? The Commissioner is nominated by the Magistrate-Collector, and naturally enough he feels a moral obligation to vote for him. But it is not men of this class who are wanted on the commission. We want men of independence—men who can think and act for themselves, and will not be swayed by the authority of the Magistrate. I am deliberately of opinion, and you will agree with me in thinking, that such men are not to be had under any system of nomination.

As it is important that the District Board should be based upon the elective system, so it is equally necessary that they should be allowed the right to choose their own chairman. It would be a slur upon our countrymen in the mofussil to assume that there are not to be found men amongst them able to undertake the duties of the chairman of the District Board. At any rate we ought to protest against the Magistrate-Collector being appointed to this important office. Ladies and gentlemen, are you familiar with the officer who in the mofussil rejoices under the name of Magistrate-Collector. The Magistrate is a dreaded divinity. He is the impersonation of British authority, the embodiment of British power. He rules his district with more than sovereign authority. He weilds more power than ever did a Persian satrap or a Napoleonic perfect. How great is his authority may be imagined from the excesses which he is occasionally guilty of, and which a lenient Government is only too ready to overlook. Poor Brahmo processionists are arrested, detain-

ed, and wantonly insulted, and yet when they complain in language at once temperate and dignified to the Head of the Government for redress, they are told it is only a misunderstanding! It is a Comedy of Errors all round? Are we really at a play-house looking at a theatrical performance, or are we on the arena of sober and practical life? Is this the answer to be given to men writhing under a deep sense of wrong? Then again a Magistrate applies to a high officer of Government one of the filthiest epithets of abuse in the Hindustanee language, and when the matter comes to the notice of the Head of the Government, what is the measure of justice dealt out to the injured officer? The Urdu Dictionary receives an important addition and we are treated to an interesting definition of the word *Badzati*! Henceforth that word is to bear a peculiar sense. It is no longer to mean the doings, of a low-born villain, but shall be understood as bearing the much less offensive sense of persistence in misbehaviour,—with this reservation, however, that on the lips of European Government servants alone and for their benefit only, *Badzati* is to have the meaning now for the first time put upon it! Urdu lexicographers, take note. "*Cedite Romani Scriptores, Cedite Graii,*"—Yield, Roman writers; yield, Greek writers; a Lieutenant-Governor is on the stage, and we must bow to his authority not only in matters of administration, but also in those of language. Such then is that high officer whom in the mofussil they call Magistrate-Collector. The impunity with which he can abuse his power, invests him with a feeling of dread in the eyes of the people, and is it possible for the most strong-minded native of India to oppose the views of such an officer? As a matter of fact, the Magistrate-Collector has all his own way in the existing committees. He does what he likes, and his colleagues are merely ornamental nobodies. The member of the Road Cess or of the Muni-

cipal Committee has not the independence to oppose any of his measures. "Moulvie so and so, I want a road to be made leading to that indigo factory," exclaims the Magistrate. The good Moulvie knows perfectly well that the road is not wanted at all. But though conscience and duty are good things in their own way, the command of the Magistrate must be implicitly obeyed. Accordingly, he votes for the road. But when in the evening he has returned home and is safely ensconced in the midst of his friends, he fastens the doors of his room, closes the chinks in the wall, so that not even the sound of the human voice may be heard outside, and that no unseen spy may communicate the conversation to the Magistrate-Collector, as he thunders forth against the high-handed proceedings of that officer and condemns the vote he gave in the morning! Such is the dread which the Magistrate inspires, and it is needless for me to say that the presence of such an officer on the Local Board would be fatal to its independence, and would mar the success of the experiment which is about to be tried. If it is indeed considered essential to appoint as chairman an officer of Government, we say appoint to that office one who shall devote his whole time to the work of the Board, who shall not hold any executive authority in the district, and shall not be subordinate to the Magistrate; such an officer will be a colleague, and not a master, and his presence will not perhaps very seriously interfere with the independence of the Board.

Ladies and gentlemen, there remains for me to consider only the last recommendation referred to in the Resolution committed to my care, viz., that which has reference to the functions and powers of the proposed Local Boards. You recommend that the powers and functions of the existing committees should be increased in view of their amalgamation. The Lieutenant-Governor himself admits in the

circular letter to which I have referred several times, that it is the absence of all authority which must account for the inefficiency of the existing committees. The truth is, that all these committees are magnificent nonentities. They are reporting bodies. Neither the Road Cess Committee, nor the Municipal Committee in the mofussil can fix the cesses or the rates, or appoint their higher officers without reference to superior authority. Then we have got that greatest of all shams—the Educational Committee, which by its constitution is purely a consultative committee and is to assist the Magistrate with advice in matters relating to primary education. What we want is that the Road Cess Committee and the Municipal Committee should both have the power of fixing the rates and appointing their officers without interference from higher authority. Not merely the semblance, but the reality of power, should be conferred upon them, before they can be useful for any purpose. The Lieutenant-Governor is anxious to confirm and extend the powers of the Education Committees. What I would suggest, on behalf of the meeting, is that the powers which the Magistrate of the District now exercises, in reference to educational matters, should be transferred to the Local Boards. The Magistrate has really a great deal more to do than any human being with ordinary strength or energy is capable of. If there is to be decentralization in all else, why not relieve the Magistrate-Collector of those duties for which he cannot now find time, and which would be more efficiently performed by local bodies?

These are, then, our views to the great question of Local Self-Government. Are they the views, let me ask, of only the inhabitants of Calcutta and its Suburbs, or do they represent the deliberate judgment of the country at large? Now, gentlemen, meetings have been held in different parts of the country—at Pubna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Bankipur,

Chittagong and Santipur, and at all these meetings, these have been precisely the views which have found expression. Lord Brougham has truly remarked that in the voice of the people is heard the thunder of the Almighty, and I am sure the illustrious statesman who presides over Indian affairs, and who is so deeply imbued with the traditions of public life in England, will know how to deal with this unanimous expression of popular opinion. We have no Parliament, no accredited representative of the people, no august senators of the nation to plead, on our behalf, before the bar of English opinion. But for my part, I do not despair of the future. Ours is essentially a progressive Government. What were the dreams of our fathers have become realities with us, and what are our fondest hopes may yet become cherished privileges with those who will come after us and live under the beneficent influences of British rule. Who could have dreamt twelve years ago that it would be seriously proposed to concede to the people the great boon of Local Self-Government in so short a time? I look upon the proposed concession as the first of a series of reforms to be effected in this direction. I regard the concession of Local Self-Government as the prelude, the precursor of national, (may I venture to hope?) of imperial Self-Government. The seedling of liberty planted in the human soil has a tendency to shoot forth into a vast and umbrageous tree. There is development in all things; progress is the law of nature. There is above all, an expansive force in the principle of liberty. May that principle grow and thrive till it has made itself felt in every department of Indian Administration. Whether the glorious consummation will take place soon, or whether it will be indefinitely postponed, must depend upon ourselves,—upon our enthusiasm and devotion to the interests of our country. The repeal of the Vernacular Press Act has taught you what may be effected by

agitation. My advice to you is—Agitate, Agitate, Agitate. You have yet to learn the great art of grumbling. When a great calamity or a terrible reverse overwhelms us, we calmly submit to our fate, and go straightway to Benares to effect our reconciliation with the superior gods. An Englishman, on the other hand, grumbles and complains, fights against the adverse fates, till his complaints have been remedied, or his grievance has been removed. The temperament of the Englishman in this respect is worthy of all imitation, and above all it is useful in the domain of political agitation. Ladies and gentlemen, have confidence in the sense of justice of the English people. England spent twenty crores of rupees to emancipate the Negro slaves. When Italy was struggling for her independence, England stretched out to her the hand of sympathy? Will she now refuse to her own dependency the great privilege of Self-Government? It is not, however, the institutions but rather the men that make a nation. The national character shapes the institutions of a people. A noble people, it has been truly remarked, can never have an ignoble government. It is for you to raise your countrymen to a higher intellectual and moral life, and then will your grievances be redressed, and the solid fabric of self-government be raised on the unchangeable basis of a nation's character, and on the deep and fervent faith, that by self-government, and through it alone, can we work out the destinies that are in store for us, under the control of England and the orderings of an over-ruling Providence.

THE RIPON MEMORIAL MEETING.

A public Meeting of the native inhabitants of Calcutta and its Suburbs was held at the Town Hall, on Thursday the 11th December 1884, with a view to vote an address to His Excellency the Marquis of Ripon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, on the eve of his departure from India. Upwards of 8,000 men were present. His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar was in the Chair. Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea supported the second resolution which ran as follows :—

"That this Meeting views with great satisfaction the demonstrations that have been held in all parts of the country in honour of the retiring Viceroy and ventures to hope that His Excellency will regard them as the earnest of unabated confidence on the part of the Native community throughout India in his abilities as a ruler and as the expression of deep respect for his disinterested efforts to promote the welfare of the people of India ; and this Meeting, in bidding His Excellency farewell begs to express the earnest hope that His Excellency will continue to retain in the repose of his own home a lively interest in the land and in the people whom he has loved so well."

Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea, in supporting the resolution, spoke as follows :—

I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution which has been so ably proposed, and seconded by my two leaders. We have met here to-night to join our voices with those of

our countrymen in other parts of the empire, to raise the chorus of grateful acclaim, in recognition of the distinguished services of the illustrious statesman who is about to retire from his high office. The present generation cannot recall to mind a spectacle so grand or so imposing which it was our lot to witness last week, when all Calcutta, laying aside for the moment the pursuit of business, or the still more ardent pursuit of pleasure, turned out with all the elaborate demonstrations of oriental loyalty and devotion to honour the Viceroy who had become, in the eyes of the people, the incarnation of Justice and of that righteousness which exalteth a nation. It was a spectacle that was calculated to stimulate the inventive genius of the poet and of the artist, as I am sure it will baffle the descriptive powers of the future historian of India. Old men, hoary with age and bent down with the weight of years, cannot remember to have witnessed a scene which, in point of enthusiasm and devotion, rivals the loyal welcome which in olden times the people of Ajudhya accorded to the exiled Rama, on his return to his country and on his accession to the throne of his ancestors. So, too, modern Ajudhya pours forth its gratitude in manifestations of loyal welcome to the modern Rama, the protector of his people. A great deal has been said with reference to the character of this and other demonstrations. It has been urged that they do not represent the spontaneous movement of a great people ; but that they are the work of wire-pullers and of third-rate obscure agitators. I ask, where is that wire-puller, who, with the waive of his magical wand, can send down a nation on their knees, and extort from unwilling lips the accents of grateful praise ? Such a wire-puller would be a man of formidable potency ; he would be like some of those heroes of ancient times, whom the Greek States ostracised to ensure their own safety and to preserve the balance of the

constitution. There is no such wire-puller; nor even such a clique of wire-pullers. The truth is that the whole nation has risen like one man in obedience to a common impulse to honour him who so richly deserves honour at our hands. Let no unworthy attempt be made to take away aught from the character of these demonstrations. Let not our critics demean to the propagation of that which is not true. Let them boldly meet the facts in the face, and learn to recognise their significance. What do these demonstrations imply? They are the spontaneous homage of a grateful people. Was ever such homage rendered to a foreign ruler? Our history is memorable with great events, with the stories of great wars, of great conquests, of great annexations. But point out to me a single passage, in the whole range of Indian history, which commemorates in so remarkable a manner the triumph of peace and of righteous principles, as it has been the lot of Lord Ripon to achieve. What is the secret of this grand national demonstration? What is the mystery which underlies it? What is the charm which has held spell-bound the heart of a great people? The secret is easly explained. The mystery melts away before the gaze of the observant enquirer. It is the honesty of the ruler, the purity of his intentions, the loftiness of his aims and purposes, his deep sympathy with the people, his statesmanlike grasp of the situation which have captivated all hearts and have awakened a nation's gratitude. We, orientals, are shrewd judges of character. Behind the graceful exterior, the profound bow, the courteous obeisance, there lurks the keen intelligence that is never at a loss to judge of character. We have had the Delhi Assemblage with its profuse expenditure and its still more profuse promises, but we were never for a moment at a loss to understand the real character of that demonstration. We regarded it then, and we regard it still, and distant

posterity will endorse the judgment, that it was the last of the brilliant series of fire-works which Benjamin Disraeli let off for the edification of the English people. We are not to be deluded by such shows, or by the mere empty trappings of power. We are no longer children. Thanks to beneficence of our rulers, we have long since passed that stage, and are now entering the period of vigorous adolescence. What we want is solid statesmanship founded upon the unchangeable principles of justice and equity. Such statesmanship we found in Lord Ripon, and hence it is that we respected him, that we honoured him, that we adored him. From the very outset Lord Ripon had a complete grasp of the situation and of the political wants and aspirations of our countrymen. Our Government is a bureaucracy, but faintly tempered by popular opinion. It is as old as this century, but within that time a mighty moral revolution has been effected. Great as has been the material development of the country, the moral revolution is completer still, and will constitute, I venture to think in the judgment of the impartial historian, England's noblest title to her imperial sway in India. English education and a Free Press have revolutionised the country. Those men who founded British supremacy in India, who had the courage to win an empire for themselves, and the sagacity to consolidate it, were never at a loss to understand the duties of their new situation and the responsibilities which it entailed upon them. Sir Charles Metcalfe, replying to a deputation that waited upon him to congratulate him upon his liberation of the Press, observed :—"Whatever might be the will of Almighty Providence with respect to the future government of India, it cannot be that we are permitted to be here merely to collect the taxes, to pay up the revenues, and to supply the deficiency. We are here for a higher and a nobler purpose,—to pour into the East the knowledge, the civilization, the arts and

the sciences of the West." In pursuance of this policy thus nobly vindicated, schools have been established all over the country, and a Free Press has been rapidly disseminating the Principles of Liberty. New ideas have been called forth into existence, new aspirations have been created; a moral revolution has been effected;—the grandest on record, which will throw into the shade the proudest achievements of Englishmen in other parts of the world. A year of Waterloos will not equal it. What could be a subject of more legitimate pride to Englishmen than to know that, under the auspices of their rule, and under the influences of their education, a great and ancient country which had been sunk in the deepest depths of ignorance and superstition, is rapidly recovering her former position and bids fair, once again, to be the home of civilisation, of knowledge, and of the arts and sciences. But the Government remains the same;—unchangeable alike in its traditions and principles. It was the same system of Government that was established by Warren Hastings; that was perpetuated by Amherst and Minto; that was emphasised by Lord Dalhousie, and that was followed in more recent times by Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook. In the meantime popular aspirations had outgrown the Government, and a repressive rule had alienated the sympathies of the people. It was at such a time that Lord Ripon arrived. Having put an end to a tedious and inglorious war, His Excellency applied himself, with characteristic energy, to the question of domestic reform. We hear in these days a great deal about Russian ambition and of Russian advance in Central Asia. But with India contented and prosperous, with her countless millions at the beck of her English rulers, Russian invasion becomes a dream, a chimera, the phantom of an excited imagination. Russian invasion assumes the faint proportions of a bare possibility, only on the assumption of the existence

of disaffection in India. Let it once be granted that India is loyal and contented, unswerving in her devotion to the Imperial throne, and the spectre of Russian invasion which looms beyond the passes of the Hindoo Koosh, melts away into the distant horizon. The ruler who has cemented the loyalty of the people, and has evoked their deepest gratitude, has not only rendered a great service to the people of India, but is entitled to the lasting gratitude of his own countrymen. Lord Ripon has thus rendered a double service to India and to England. In the name of this two-fold service, I invite this great gathering of my countrymen to record their expression of deep gratitude to the retiring Viceroy. Well, one of the very first questions which Lord Ripon took up was that relating to Municipal reform. Referring to the importance of Municipal institutions, Mr. Gladstone has observed in one of his recent speeches that "they are the seedplots, around which and upon which habits of political thought and political capacity are formed throughout the country." It is unnecessary to enter into the merits of Lord Ripon's scheme of Local Self-Government; but this I will say, that the foundations have been laid, and we have to build the superstructure upon them. If we succeed in the matter of Local Self-Government, we have a strong case with which we may go up to the Government and invite them to extend the principles of Local Self-Government to the wider concerns of Provincial Administration. We might, in short, ask them to reconstitute the Provincial Councils and even the Supreme Council itself. I know not whether there are any honourable members present at this meeting; but if there be, I make my courteous bow to them before I proceed to make my onslaught upon the institution which they represent. These Legislative Councils are so many happy families which debate nothing, discuss nothing, but meet only to register the preordained decrees

of the Executive Government. They have not even the consoling reflection of being permitted, by means of interpellations, to go behind the acts of the executive Government. They are magnificent and gilded nonentities, very well suited perhaps to the conditions of a backward society, but utterly out of place among a keen and intelligent community such as ours. Now all this must be changed. If we are loyal to Local Self-Government, the attainment of national self-government becomes only a matter of time. But I have heard disappointment expressed by a certain journalist, whose utterances till lately were entitled to weight, with regard to the fruits of Local Self-Government. I would say to this journalist, and to all whom it may concern—"Let us wait and let us have patience—let us not anticipate in a day the fruits of a century." What are a few years in the lifetime of a nation? There is such a thing as growth in political institutions. What was the House of Commons at first, what is it now? What was at first a mere deliberative assembly, summoned by the will of the Sovereign, and dependant for its existence upon his will, became in the course of time the dictator and ruler of the Sovereign himself. The seeds have been sown by the hands of the most beneficent ruler whom India has ever had. They are entrusted to our care, our keeping, and our guardianship. Let us watch over them with tender and parental solicitude, and I am sure that under the providence of God, we shall reap a plentiful harvest. If ever India should become a self-governing country under the protectorate of England, the glory and the honour of that achievement will belong to Lord Ripon, and to him alone. In the same way the credit of the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act belongs Lord Ripon. The question of the repeal was left entirely to the discretion of the Viceroy, and on the 19th of January 1882—a day that

shall be memorable in the annals of Indian progress—the Act was removed from the statute-book. If Sir Charles Metcalfe claims at our hands the homage to which he is entitled as the liberator of the Indian Press, some measure of our gratitude is at least due to the restorer of the lost liberty of the Vernacular Press. Attempts are being made in certain quarters to discredit the repeal of the Press Law. Extracts are from time to time published in the newspapers of this country, and which are telegraphed to newspapers in England—garbled extracts, as I have no hesitation in calling them—with a view to delude public opinion. But if the Anglo-Native Press is true to those traditions of sobriety and moderation, which have been handed down from the days of Hurrish Chunder Mookerjee and which were emphasised by the example of the late illustrious Kristo Dass Paul, we need have no apprehensions with regard to the fortunes of the Native Press of India. I fear, gentlemen, I have been trespassing too much upon your time, I have been trying your patience (cries of—No, no, go on). It is unnecessary for me to enter into the varied measures of Lord Ripon's administration. The whole of his policy was based upon an earnest desire to carry out the gracious Proclamation of the Queen. What is this Proclamation? How do we regard it? What were the circumstances under which it was issued? These are important considerations, to which for a few moments I would venture to invite the attention of this meeting. The Proclamation is the *Magna Charta* of our rights and liberties. The Proclamation, the whole Proclamation, nothing but the Proclamation—is our watch-word, our battle cry. It is the ensign of battle and the ensign of victory. It is the gospel of our political redemption. Mark the circumstances under which that memorable document was issued. The country had just passed through the horrors of the Mutiny;

the Queen had assumed the direct Government of the empire; for the first time the personal relationship between subject and sovereign had been established. It was under such circumstances, at such a time, upon such a historical occasion that her gracious Majesty the Queen was pleased to issue this Proclamation, and to add to the solemnity of the situation, the Almighty God was invoked to shower down His blessings upon this beneficent act of imperial favour. But years passed away, and the gracious promises of the Proclamation were not fulfilled, and as late as the year 1877, Lord Lytton, upon an important public occasion, declared that the Proclamation remained inadequately redeemed. There are those who would give worlds to recall the Proclamation, who would spend all their legal lore and their ingenuity, and if my lawyer friends will permit me, their legal perversity, in thinning away the beneficent provisions of this memorable declaration, and who would regard it as the expression of a barren sentiment, good for a ceremonial, but good for nothing else. These are the men who hold that the unchangeable principles of morality are bounded by climatic considerations—that what is just and proper in the temperate regions, is unjust and iniquitous in this hapless torrid zone. Against such a monstrous doctrine the conscience of mankind proclaims—against such principles, the enlightened sentiment of the civilized world pleads, and it is against such a pernicious doctrine that Lord Ripon entered his protest in words that shall be graven in our minds and in the minds of our children's children. Let me read to you his protest:—"To me it seems a very serious thing to put forth to the people of India a doctrine which renders worthless the solemn words of their Sovereign, and which converts her gracious promises which her Indian subjects have cherished for a quarter of a century into a hollow mockery as meaningless as the com-

pliments which form the invariable opening of an oriental letter. Sir Fitz-James Stephen, it seems to me, is not consistent, for he admits, in the course of the document which I have quoted, that the Proclamation binds the Government of India in regard to the native Princes and States, but in regard to Her Majesty's own immediate subjects, it is according to his view of no force whatever, it gives no pledge, and it lays down no principle. But if it binds the Government towards the Princes of India, it binds it to the people of India as well. The document is not a treaty; it is not a diplomatic instrument; it is a declaration of principles of Government which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to all to whom it is addressed. The document, therefore, to which Sir Fitz-James Stephen has given the sanction of his authority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honour of my country; and if it were once to be received and acted upon by the Government of England, it would do more than anything else could possibly do to strike at the root of our power and to destroy our just influence. Because that power and that influence rest upon the conviction of our good faith more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our arms. I have heard to-day with no little surprise a very different argument. The Hon'ble Mr. Thomas, in his speech, in which he endeavoured to stir up the bitterness of a controversy which was dying out, and which was approaching a settlement, and to fan again the dying embers of race animosity, has asked. —Was there ever a nation which retained her supremacy by the righteousness of her laws? I have read in a book, the authority of which the Hon'ble Mr. Thomas will admit, that righteousness exalteth a nation, and my study of history, which has not been limited, has led me to the con-

clusion that it is not by force of her armies or by the might of her soldiery that a great empire is permanently maintained; but that it is by the righteousness of her laws, by her respect for the principles of justice. To believe otherwise appears to me to assume that there is not a God in Heaven who rules over the affairs of men, and who can punish injustice and iniquity in nations as surely as he can in the individuals of which they are composed. It is against doctrines like these that I desire to protest, and it is against principles of this description that the gracious Proclamation of the Queen was directed. So long, then, as I hold the office which I now fill, I shall conduct the administration in this country in strict accordance with the policy which has been enjoined upon me by my Queen and my Government."

The excellence of Lord Ripon's policy does not, indeed, consist in this measure or in that, but in the distinctly elevated moral tone which he imparted to the entire administration of the Empire. There was a distinctly forward movement along the whole line towards a definite goal, the path to which was illumined by that inspiration which is begotten of sympathy. There was no diplomacy, no political jugglery, no *legerdemain*, no Delhi assemblages to be followed by Madras famines, but everything was bright, clear, transparently honest. It is not for me to anticipate the verdict of history; but if I am permitted to take a forecast of things future, this I will say without a moment's hesitation, that when the present shall have vanished into the ever-receding past, when the animosities of the present hour shall have given place to the dominance of the historic judgment, then the amplest justice will be rendered to Lord Ripon, and in the illustrious musterroll of Indian statesmen, he will take his place by the side of a Bentinck and a Canning. Lord Ripon has enthroned himself in the

hearts of the people such as no other Indian ruler had before done, his word is more potent for good than have ever been the words of kings and emperors, and he will stand forth before posterity as the prophet-king of Anglo Indian history, for he sought to govern the people, not so much with the aid of the material appliances of the great civilized Power of which he was the chief and the representative; but with that moral domination, which represents the completest form of rule which man can assert over man. Lord Ripon has consecrated British rule with the celestial touch of Christian benignity. He has uplifted the Empire to a higher level of moral grandeur, he has surrounded the throne of the Queen-Empress with the greatest bulwark which it can enjoy—the affectionate gratitude of a contented people. Let the Russians come, if they may; let them be assisted by all the gallantry and the martial heroism of the fierce hordes of Central Asia; so long as there are Ripons to rule over us, so long as the policy which he has initiated is maintained and upheld, the rolling wave of Russian invasion will be driven back behind the passes of the Hindoo Koosh, and the throne of the Empress-Mother, planted safe in the affections of a grateful people, will be our rallying-point, the symbol of our unity, of our loyalty and our devotion to British supremacy. Your Reception Committee have resolved to raise a suitable Memorial in honour of the retiring Viceroy. I wish them God-speed in this noble endeavour. But whether your Memorial be of marble or of brass, Lord Ripon will live in the imperishable pages of history with a lustre all his own. The most suitable Memorial which you can raise in his honour is to consecrate your lives towards the extension and consolidation of that policy which Lord Ripon has bequeathed as a legacy to India and a legacy to Englar England, I am sure, will do her duty in this matter.

Britain, the august mother of free nations, will extend her justice and her beneficence to her great dependency. I invite you to perform your part of the duty, and, unless I am greatly mistaken in the character of my countrymen, and in the significance of this grand demonstration, I may assure myself of a cordial response. It now remains for us to bid farewell to Lord Ripon. The blessings of a nation attend him to his Western home! What are crowns, what are diadems, what are earthly possessions in comparison with the profuse and spontaneous love of a great people? It is our earnest hope and prayer that he may long be spared to devote himself to the furtherance of the honour of his country, and the promotion of the true interests of that people, who have loved him with a love such as they have never accorded to a foreign ruler.